

Armenian official says siege goes on

MOSCOW (R) — An Armenian official Saturday dismissed central press reports that an Azerbaijani blockade of his republic had ended, saying thousands of fuel and food were still being held back. The Communist Party daily Pravda and other newspapers reported that the blockade had been broken and normal rail traffic restored between Armenia and Azerbaijan from 6 p.m. Friday. "What Pravda says is just not true," a spokesman for the official Armenian news agency Armenpress told Reuters by telephone from the capital, Yerevan. "We have not received a drop of fuel or grain or any other food from Azerbaijan." He said some trains carrying building materials had got through since troops were dispatched to Armenia's northeastern border with Azerbaijan Oct. 3 to break the blockade. "But it is only thanks to Georgia that we are getting any food and fuel at all," he said, adding that Armenia was planning to build a second rail link with its northwestern neighbour. The official Soviet news agency TASS reported Friday that hundreds of trains were moving between Azerbaijan and Armenia, while saying that 60,000 wagons were stranded on sidings and that it would take five to six days to resume a full service.

Jordan Times

An independent political daily published by the Jordanian Foundation
جوردان تايمز من مؤسسة الأردن السياسية

Volume 14 Number 4207

AMMAN SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1989, RABIA AWWAL 8, 1410

Price: Jordan 100 fils; Syria 1 pound; Lebanon 1 pound; Saudi Arabia 1.50 riyals; UAE 1.50 dirhams; Great Britain 25 pence

Parliament will not be a forum for speeches but a national institution for policy-making

King: Jordan on threshold of new stage

By a Jordan Times Staff Writer

AMMAN — Jordan is on the threshold of a new stage in its history and the Kingdom's parliament which is expected to be elected on Nov. 8 will not be a forum for speeches but a national policy-making body on every sphere of Jordanian life, His Majesty King Hussein said Saturday.

Addressing the country in a speech broadcast on Jordan Television and radio, the King also warned against overenthusiasm over the next phase of Jordan's life without knowing the exact nature of what lies ahead.

Reviewing the roots of parliamentary life in Jordan and explaining the different phases the Kingdom has passed through, the King said: "We are on the threshold of a new start, we

should get to know the nature of the horse we are going to ride, the land we shall tread... (and) not get carried away by enthusiasm... or avoid facing reality..."

The King also warned against mixing religion with politics and cited the Lebanese strife as an example of the results of such mixture.

"Our Arab Nation stands today before new hostile attempts to dismember it along sectarian and religious lines," he said.

"This is a great danger... unequalled by any other danger because it comes from within."

Referring to expected restoration of parliamentary life in Jordan with the Nov. 8 elections, the King said: "I don't believe any of you want to the experiment to fail. God forbid, through extremism, excesses or fooling around."

In an obvious reference to Iran, the King said the Lebanese

conflict had been fuelled by external non-Arab interference, and that religion had been exploited "as a way to achieve political gains and reach power, and as a tool for the execution of the plots by certain foreign countries."

"Native religious people were organised and others seeking money and influence were... trained to kill innocent people, take hostages, kill pilgrims... and plant explosives in the Grand Mosque of Mecca," he said.

The King assailed Islamic preachers who were more concerned about the way women dressed than their roles in family and society. "They have forgotten that Islam is the religion of ethics and values which curb all animal instincts in both men and women and that Islam is the religion of action and production that cannot accept the crippling

of half the society or concede on its lofty perspectives on our mothers, sisters and daughters," he said. "Our religion is the religion of forgiveness and moderation. It is the religion of mercy..."

Joint ACC parliament

The King revealed that the four member states of the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) — Jordan, Egypt, North Yemen and Iraq — were moving towards setting up a joint parliament.

The King said the four countries were now in the process of forming a joint committee, which will take part in formulating the country's policies concerning industry, agriculture, trade, culture, education, public services, energy, housing and various other fields," the King said. It is the responsibilities placed on this country coming as a result of

between religion. "Evil forces are trying to destroy the peaceful and fruitful relationship between Christians and Muslims for hundreds of years," he cautioned and called for support for the efforts of the Arab League to end the 14-year-old Lebanese civil war.

The King expressed hope that the Nov. 8 elections will herald a "new stage of serious socio-political development, and pave the way for further inter-Arab integration."

"The next parliament, will not serve as a forum for making political statements but rather as a national institute in which we will all take part in formulating the country's policies concerning industry, agriculture, trade, culture, education, public services, energy, housing and various other fields," the King said. It is the responsibilities placed on this country coming as a result of

developments at the local, regional and international levels that herald the coming days as a new stage in the life of our country.

"The elections come at a time as Jordan faces new challenges that require solidarity, cohesion and added efforts so that fruitful results can be attained."

"In the coming stage, we will not suffice ourselves with mere slogans, but we will embark on objective and responsible dialogue; and we must remember that our country is in dire need of a parliament that can help solve its numerous problems with reason, positive thinking and rationality."

Jordan's July 1988 decision to sever ties with the occupied West Bank removed all obstacles in the path of a parliamentary election in Jordan, he said.

But, he added, one should emphasise two major factors that give the coming stage its new character.

One of these factors is the coincidence of deciding to hold elections and the decision to sever legal and administrative ties with the West Bank, the King noted. He said the past two decades were full of major events and developments and Jordan had to deal with situations resulting from continued Israeli occupation of Palestine while at the same time had to carry out four national development schemes to improve its standing at all levels.

The past two decades he said, witnessed fast growth and social, economic developments in educational health, agricultural, and industrial fields with vast improvements in tourism social

(Continued on page 2)



Israeli troops prevent peace activists from meeting Arabs

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israeli troops blocked about 1,000 Israeli peace activists from entering the occupied West Bank Saturday to hold a symbolic meeting with Palestinians.

"The importance of our being here today is to say 'yes' to peace after the government said 'no' to peace yesterday," said Palestinian nationalist Faisal Al Hussein, who joined the Peace Now group of Israelis trying to reach the town of Tulkarm.

Hussein, named as a potential delegate to direct Israeli-Palestinian peace talks which Egypt has proposed holding in Cairo, was referring to the Israeli inner cabinet's decision rejecting such a meeting.

He was loudly applauded as he pointed to the army roadblock which halted Peace Now's fleet of cars and buses and said: "This

barrier is typical of the many obstacles, large and small, which the Israeli government tries to put between us."

The activists, who had intended to meet Palestinians in Tulkarm, held a two-hour rally beside the checkpoint on the line between Israel and the West Bank.

"Pro-peace forces in the Palestine Liberation Organisation are dominant now," Hussein told the rally in Arabic. A Peace Now member translated.

"I think pro-peace forces will soon also become dominant in the Israeli government and there will be no more barriers between us," he added.

Other speakers also condemned Friday's tied vote — meaning a rejection — by the inner cabinet. Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's Likud bloc opposes key

aspects of Cairo's proposals while the Labour Party accepts them as a basic for talks.

"It was another example of where this government is leading us," said Israeli Arab parliamentarian Tewfik Toubi, leader of the Communist Party. "All talk of peace is rubbish."

Troops told Peace Now organisers that Tulkarm was a closed military area, a tactic used several times by the army over the last two weeks to prevent visits to areas in the West Bank by diplomats, journalists and peace activists.

On Friday troops stopped seven West European consuls general from going to the town of Beit Sahour, where the Israeli occupation authorities have been seizing the property of people refusing to pay taxes as part of a civil disobedience campaign.

King receives Iraqi, Libyan messages

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Saturday received messages from Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi, dealing with the situations in the region and scopes of collective Arab action, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said.

Delivering the Iraqi message was Iraqi Justice Minister Akram Abdul Qader, who arrived in Amman Saturday morning.

In another audience, the King received Libyan envoy Major Ali Khawweldi Al Humaidi, who arrived in Amman and received from him Qaddafi's message.

Major Humaidi, third-in-command of Libya's revolutionary leadership, left Amman later Saturday.

Jordan pledges total support for WMA efforts to end nuclear threat

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Saturday sent a message to the World Medical Association (WMA) pledging Jordan's support for its endeavours to end all forms of nuclear tests and ensure world peace.

"In the name of the Jordanian people and government and myself I send you support and backing for your noble endeavours and to your conference designed to enable the world community to avoid total destruction," the King said in his message to the (WMA) which is opening an international conference in the Japanese city of Hiroshima to discuss measures to help the world to dispose of all nuclear arsenals.

King Hussein described the creation of WMA as a natural outcome of a worldwide opposition to the destruction of mankind through nuclear conflict.

Following are major excerpts from the King's message: "Your movement is a natural outgrowth of public opposition to

the potential devastation to mankind that lies in the nuclear threat. This opposition is representative of the great majority of public opinion which is becoming increasingly aware and weary of the issue of nuclear arms. After all, this planet belongs to all of us and, therefore, it is our duty to be concerned about it, and to collaborate in protecting it from nuclear danger. By doing so, we protect the future of mankind."

"Your congress's expert opinion, as a concerned group of physicians, must be given the highest consideration and receive the widest support from us all. Your deliberations on the effects of nuclear war should provide the most important perspective to decision-makers, political leaders and military strategists. I would also like to register our appreciation for your contribution which was instrumental in the signing of the agreement placing a moratorium on nuclear testing. Jordan is a signatory to the call to convene the conference on banning nuclear

testing, which was held under the auspices of the United Nations in February 1989. It is our sincere hope that this will constitute a major step towards total nuclear disarmament and the dismantling of the stockpiled nuclear arsenal."

Jordan is a signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty of nuclear arms. The government of Jordan also fully endorses the proposal of the Jordanian delegation to the IPPNW which was adopted by your conference in Montreal in July 1988. The Jordanian resolution urges state and government leaders in the Middle East to officially and openly declare that their countries will, by no means, initiate the production of nuclear weapons, nor will they allow the development or stockpiling of such weapons on their national territories. I hereby declare, through your congress, Jordan's commitment to this resolution. I urge you to continue your efforts to secure the commitments of other countries in the

region, particularly Israel.

"The nightmare of nuclear weapons is a real and haunting one that weighs heavy on the human consciousness. As a deterrence to war, it demonstrated that perfect defence is nothing more than an illusion which holds both attacker and defender captive, any effort to free humanity from this captivity is noble and worthwhile. Nuclear disarmament is an imperative, if nuclear war is to be avoided."

"I wish your congress every success in promoting a better understanding of the nuclear paradox in which even the winners would be losers and all humanity would suffer."

Over 2,500 delegates from 70 countries, including Jordan, are attending the week-long conference in Hiroshima.

The WMA, which was founded in 1980 groups 70 countries which are dedicating their efforts towards ending all forms of nuclear weapons.

PLO slams Israeli rejection of proposal for dialogue...

CAIRO (Agencies) — A Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) official Saturday condemned Israel's apparent rejection of proposed peace talks as an attempt to crush Palestinian protests in the occupied territories, Egypt's Middle East News Agency (MENA) reported.

Zohdi Al Kudra, Cairo representative of PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's mainstream Fateh organisation, told the agency the Israeli inner cabinet's vote Friday "emphasises Israel's intransigence."

It was the first public reaction by a ranking PLO official since the Israeli cabinet session. Kudra, who is acting head of the PLO mission in Cairo, also described as a delaying tactic the cabinet's vote on an Egyptian proposal to host direct Israeli-Palestinian talks.

MENA reported Kudra as urging governments to persuade the United States to compel Israel to respond to peace overtures, and he reiterated PLO pledges that the 22-month upris-

ing would continue. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, with backing from Arafat, had called on Israel to join in the first direct talks with Palestinians to discuss Israel's May 14 proposal of elections in the occupied territories.

The Israeli cabinet vote resulted in a tie between the hard-line Likud and Labour Party ministers, enough under cabinet rules to block Egypt's initiative. The Israeli action also threatens the survival of that country's coalition cabinet, said Nabil Shaath, a key political adviser to Arafat.

But Egypt's Foreign Minister Esmat Meguid was less pessimistic.

"The situation is still under discussion," Abdul Meguid told reporters.

"Consultations are underway with the United States and Israel in this regard," he added without elaboration.

The United States has dismissed the Israeli rejection as "parliamentary manoeuvring" and

said the door was not closed to peace.

State Department spokesman Richard Boucher told reporters: "Let me point out that in the Israeli cabinet there has been a full discussion, but no acceptance or rejection of Egypt's ideas. There's been a lot of parliamentary manoeuvring... but we are not going to comment on that internal manoeuvring."

At the White House, presidential spokesman Martin Fitzwater said: "Obviously our position is that we would like to see a dialogue and we thought the Egyptian plan had great promise... so we'll continue to work with both parties."

On Saturday, Cairo newspapers carried front-page reports from Washington saying a team of U.S. State Department officials was expected in the Egyptian capital in the next few days to help maintain momentum in the peace process.

Arafat, a frequent visitor to Cairo, was also expected here soon for talks with Mubarak.

TAIF, Saudi Arabia (R) — King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, with a letter to Lebanese Christian leader Michel Aoun, has joined other Arab mediators in trying to save troubled talks on the future of Lebanon.

Sixty-two Lebanese members of parliament, meeting in Saudi Arabia, have temporarily abandoned plans to discuss the key issue — withdrawal of Syrian troops from their country — in full session in the hope that Arab mediators will find them a way out of the impasse.

Georges Saadeh, leader of the right-wing Lebanese Front, told a news conference in Taif: "We've left this clause aside to be dealt with in behind-the-scenes contacts... so that it won't give rise to angry exchanges."

The students seized the Fokker 28 during a domestic flight in Burma Friday and ordered it flown to Bangkok. They then threatened to blow up the craft and the 83 other people on board if their demands for democratic reform in Burma were not met.

But after 10 hours of negotiations with Thai and Burmese officials, the hostages were freed unharmed and the students gave themselves up.

Early Saturday morning, the hijackers released the last group of 42 hostages and left the airplane with Thailand's Deputy Prime Minister Tienchai Sirirapan, who had conducted most of the night's negotiations.

A few minutes later Thai navy commandos moved into the camp

"King Fahd is conducting contacts and has sent letters on the subject to several states, including one to General Aoun."

King Fahd's letters were the latest move by an Arab mediation committee of Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Morocco and the Arab League which arranged the Taif meeting and a ceasefire in Beirut.

Saadeh, the most prominent Christian to talk to the press in Taif, is de facto leader of right-wing Christian deputies who find the mediators' timetable for Syrian withdrawal too slow and uncertain.

"Sovereignty is the demand of every Lebanese," he told reporters. "Those who insist on a Syrian presence do so for their own personal interests... every one wants peace and security but

not at any price."

Under the mediators' "charter for national reconciliation" Syria's 33,000 troops would redeploy in eastern Lebanon within two years of the parliament approving political reforms in favour of Muslims.

Deputies say the Christian faction wants to accelerate the programme but Saadeh declined to set his own deadline.

"I haven't said either immediate withdrawal or a permanent and eternal presence (of Syrian troops)," he said.

Muslim politicians say the Syrians are needed to keep order until Lebanese forces are strong enough to suppress scores of private armies which sprang up during 14 years of conflict.

Deputies say Saudi Foreign

Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal and other Arab mediators have been telling the right-wing Christians that the Arab charter is a golden opportunity and they would be wise to accept it in some form.

But Saadeh said: "The charter is not the Koran or the Bible. We have to agree on every word... (or else) peace would be a time bomb that would blow everyone up later."

"We are not prepared to offer our children to the slaughter every 10 years."

Unlike Muslim deputies, who have adopted the slogan "failure is forbidden," Saadeh did not rule out the possibility of the Taif talks, now in their second week, collapsing. He emphasised the width of the gap to be bridged.

"No one is prepared to abandon the principles in which he believes... in Lebanon there's disagreement on what words mean, there's disagreement on sovereignty, on what we mean by positive, on everything," he said.

"We are in favour of reaching a final and permanent settlement that lasts a long time. That's why we are working and discussing and consulting," he added.

Saadeh gave no details of King Fahd's letter but said he discussed it with Aoun Saturday morning.

The Saudi monarch also wrote to Aoun's rival, acting Prime Minister Salim Al Hoss, urging him to persuade Muslim deputies to adopt a "unified position towards the charter for national reconciliation," the Kuwaiti News Agency (KUNA) reported.

... as Israelis looks to U.S.

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israeli leaders Saturday said they were turning their attention to a peace offer from U.S. Secretary of State James Baker after the coalition government rejected an Egyptian plan for Israeli-Palestinian talks.

Leaders of Israel's two major parties said they were encouraged by the offer, which is likely to face strong opposition from hard-liners in Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's right-wing Likud bloc.

Friday, Israel's 12-member policy making inner cabinet voted 6-6 along party lines on a Labour Party motion to accept the proposal by President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt. A tie vote amounted to a rejection of the proposal. In Washington, U.S. officials

said Secretary of State James Baker was trying to keep the Egyptian proposal alive. They said that after the Israeli cabinet vote, Baker spoke by telephone with Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens and Egyptian Foreign Minister Esmat Abdul Meguid.

Arens said Baker proposed that Israel, Egypt and the United States meet for consultations on the construction of a Palestinian delegation for peace talks.

"This offer does not contain the dangers in the proposal set forth by the Labour Party," Arens said to Israel radio. He said the difference between the proposals was whether Israel is to meet with a PLO delegation or a

delegation of Palestinians set up with our agreement."

Arens said Baker first made the offer in a telephone conversation last week and he asked Baker Thursday to formally submit the proposal to Israel. He said the offer could be discussed in the government's next meeting.

Labour party leader Shimon Peres said he did "not see any real differences between the Baker offer and the Mubarak proposal."

He said if the Likud had proposed the Baker offer in Friday's cabinet meeting "we would now be in a different situation."

The 12-member inner cabinet rejected Cairo's offer on Friday.

Burmese hijackers surrender

UTAPHAO (Agencies) — Two Burmese students who hijacked a jetliner in a protest for democracy in their military-ruled homeland surrendered Saturday, and a Thai official indicated they would be treated leniently.

"We think they are students and not professional terrorists," he said on condition of anonymity.

Another official, also speaking on condition of anonymity, said "I think really now it is a matter of looking at the details of the negotiations and the conditions for the surrender."

The hijackers told Thai authorities "after surrendering they would be executed if sent back to Burma, state-run Radio Thailand said."

Although Thailand has nurtured friendly relations with Burma, it does not have a formal extradition treaty with that country. The first official said it was possible the students would be sent to a third country.

Thirty-five hostages were re-

leased late Friday and the remaining 48 passengers and crew were allowed to leave early Saturday. Aung Gyi, a Burmese embassy official, said the passengers would be sent back to Burma.

The hijackers had demanded the release of political prisoners, an end to military rule and the restoration of democracy in Burma.

But Thailand's deputy government spokesman Likit Hongladarom, said the hijackers — identified as Yen Yin and Ye Thi Ha — simply wanted their demands known and published by the press. They had probably not expected the Rangoon government would act on them, he said.

Slogans were scribbled with a felt pen on the inside and outside of the aircraft, recalling last year's military crackdown on the student-led uprising in Burma.

"Democracy and human rights for our people" and "Our heads are bloody but unbowed," the slogans read.

U.S. sees unprecedented arms opportunity

ROME (R) — U.S. arms negotiator Richard Burt said Saturday the West had a unique chance to reach disarmament accords with Moscow but he stopped short of predicting early agreement on cutting long-range nuclear arsenals.

"We in the West should strike while the iron is hot," said Burt, head of the U.S. delegation at the strategic arms reduction (START) talks with the Soviet Union in Geneva.

He was briefing the defence and security committee of the North Atlantic Assembly, NATO's 16-nation consultative parliamentary forum, on progress in START negotiations.

Burt said changes in Soviet policy under President Mikhail Gorbachev had given the West an unprecedented opportunity to reach an accord on a range of weapons.

"Historians will judge us in a negative light if we don't seize it," he said.

U.S. President George Bush and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze have both said that a START treaty might be ready to sign at a planned superpower summit in 1990.

Their assessments followed talks in Wyoming last month between U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and Shevardnadze at which Moscow dropped a demand that a START treaty should be linked to a ban on U.S. space-based defences.

Burt said the basic framework for a treaty that would halve U.S. and Soviet nuclear warheads to 6,000 each was in place but that "four or five very important issues remain unresolved."

These included problems over air- and sea-launched cruise missiles and differences over the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) treaty.

U.N. condemns Israeli policies

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — The General Assembly, with only Israel and the United States opposed, Friday condemned Israeli policies in the occupied territories and called for measures to protect Palestinians living there.

The resolution, sponsored by 21 Arab states plus other non-aligned countries, was adopted by a vote of 140-2 with six abstentions, a sizeable increase from last year's vote which was approved by 130-2 with 16 abstentions.

The United States joined Israel again this year in opposing the resolution. Abstaining were Uruguay, El Salvador, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada and Zaire.

Both the United States and Israel contended the resolution was one-sided, with U.S. Representative Alexander Watson saying it distorted a difficult situation by including sweeping condemnations of Israeli policies.

Canada, Chile and Australia told the assembly they had misgivings about the resolution but decided to support it anyway.

The resolution calls for the Security Council to consider urgently measures needed to protect Palestinian civilians in the occupied territories and asks U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar to examine the situation "by all means available," and submit periodic reports.

It also condemns "those policies and practices of Israel, the occupying power, which violate the human rights of the Palestinian people" and demands that Israel abide by the Fourth Geneva Convention on the treatment of civilians in time of war.

Israel responded by saying that the resolution ignored reality as well as the government's attempts to quell violence.

Israeli delegate said the latest violence "conducted" by the

PLO was against the "land itself and all that live on it, the trees, wildlife and human beings."

In a reference to an arson fire on Sept. 19 that destroyed 250,000 trees on Mount Carmel, near Haifa, he said, "these acts are all the more repulsive at a time of worldwide concern for the welfare of the environment."

Farouk Kaddoumi, the foreign affairs spokesman for the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), told the assembly that Israel claimed to have been distressed about burned trees when people, including children have been killed.

"It is surprising to see that Israel today should reject the accords and resolutions adopted by (the U.N.), the very organisation that gave birth to Israel," he said.

Libyan Ambassador Ali Treiki, speaking for the Arab group called the resolution "moderate and balanced," saying it had been dictated by the tragic conditions of the Palestinian people under Israeli occupation.

"The Palestinian people have raised the olive branch to express their yearning for peace," he said.

"But this olive branch was greeted with napalm and other means of destruction, thus amputating the hand of the Palestinian child holding the olive branch," he added.

The resolution also expresses "profound shock" at the indiscriminate killing of Palestinian civilians as well as the recent ransacking of houses in the town of Beit Sahour.

Israeli tax officials last month



A Palestinian boy is seized by Israeli soldiers in Ramallah

raided the Beit Sahour six times when residents, supported by Israeli peace activists, refused to pay their taxes.

The General Assembly resolution condemns such practices as "the opening of fire by the Israeli

army and settlers that result in the killing and wounding of defenceless Palestinian civilians, the beating and breaking of bones, the deportation of Palestinian civilians," and economic crackdowns.

The General Assembly took up the Palestine resolution the same day that Israel's divided inner cabinet rejected an Egyptian plan calling for talks with a Palestinian delegation in Cairo.

Many leaders of Prime Minister

Yitzhak Shamir's right-wing Likud viewed the Egyptian invitation, involving meetings with Palestinians from outside the occupied territories, as a trick to get Israel to talk indirectly to the PLO.

Red Cross pulls 4 Swiss workers from Sidon

BEIRUT (R) — The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has pulled out its remaining four Swiss workers from the southern Lebanese city of Sidon after two of its men were kidnapped there, Red Cross sources said Saturday.

Security and Red Cross sources said the four arrived in a convoy at their headquarters in west Beirut late Friday. They went into a meeting with their officials on Saturday to evaluate the latest kidnapping.

Emmanuel Christen, 32, and Elio Enriquez, 25, were seized Friday by gunmen outside a Red Cross orthopaedic centre in Sidon near the Palestinian refugee camp of 'Ain Al Hilweh.

The Red Cross sources refused to say whether they intended to stop using foreign staff in Sidon, which has seen more than six kidnappings of foreign aid workers in the last year. One source said the staff's move was temporary.

The port of Sidon, 40 kilometres south of Beirut, is the largest stronghold of Palestinian

fighters in Lebanon. Friday's kidnapping brought the total number of Westerners missing and believed kidnapped in Lebanon to 19.

On Friday the Red Cross closed down the orthopaedic centre run by the two Swiss technicians, where handicapped Lebanese and Palestinians were fitted with artificial limbs.

Intensive efforts by various Palestinian factions to secure the release of the two men have so far yielded no results.

Mo'een Shohayda, Lebanon's representative of the mainstream Palestinian Fatah group, linked their abduction to the imprisonment in Switzerland of Lebanese hijacker Hussein Mohammad Hariri.

Hariri was sentenced by a Swiss court to life imprisonment last February for hijacking an Air Afrique plane to Geneva in 1987 and killing a French passenger.

Hariri's mother told Visnews, the international television film agency, there was no connection between her son's imprisonment

and the latest kidnapping.

"We don't support such actions. We respect the Red Cross and its Swiss workers," Hariri's mother said at her house in the southern city of Tyre.

Security sources said the kidnappers were from the extremist Palestinian Fatah Revolutionary Council (FRC), led by Abu Nidal.

Last November FRC men kidnapped Swiss Red Cross delegate Peter Winkler and handed him over to Shi'ite extremists to force Geneva to change Hariri's life sentence, the sources said.

Winkler was released one month later after the intervention of Yasser Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

Shohayda said Friday that the kidnappers of the two technicians were the same as those who abducted Winkler.

But the FRC, in a statement sent to an international news agency, strongly condemned the abduction of the two Red Cross delegates and offered to help

secure their release.

"This suspicious act is a repetition of the previous abduction of Mr. Peter Winkler whose release was subject to bargaining deals by various factions," the FRC said.

The Geneva-based ICRC helps victims of Lebanon's civil war, visits prisoners of war, arranges prisoner exchanges and aids thousands of displaced people. It operates rehabilitation centres and mobile clinics.

Last December it evacuated its 14 Swiss staff from Lebanon because of threats aimed at securing Hariri's release. Switzerland also withdrew its ambassador from Lebanon.

It was the first time the ICRC had pulled out all its Swiss staff from a country in its 125-year history. They returned in January after receiving assurances about their safety.

The ICRC was among a handful of agencies which kept foreign staff in Lebanon after a spate of kidnappings and killings forced the bulk of the Western community to leave in 1986.

Sudan junta disbands military courts

KHARTOUM (Agencies) — Sudan's military rulers are disbanding their military court system and returning civilian judges to the bench, the first slackening of the army's power since its June 30 coup.

Brigadier Ahmad Mahmoud Hassan, legal adviser to the ruling 15-officer council, announced the move Friday but did not explain why Omar Hassan Al Bashir, the junta leader, did it.

According to official Radio Omdurman, Bashir's decree appointed four tribunals for the Khartoum area, including an appellate court. It empowered Attorney General Ismail Al Bialy to appoint prosecutors for them and for provincial courts.

The decree said the military courts were disbanded with immediate effect. But it said, "their rulings will remain effective until they are considered by the new tribunals."

Courts-martial have dealt with three major cases since they were set up shortly after Bashir's coup, convicting on corruption charges two officials of the overthrown civilian government and acquitting one.

It was unclear whether the transfer of judicial authority will affect the application of Islamic law in Sudan, a principal cause of the continuing civil war in southern Sudan. Mainly non-Muslim southern rebels demand that the laws be abrogated.

Bashir's decree did not mention Islamic law imposed nationwide by former President Jaafar Numeiri in 1983. Sharia remains Sudan's basic legal system although the hudud, its harsh punishments such as amputation

of thieves' limbs, has not been implemented since Numeiri lost power in a 1985 coup.

Under the civilian regime Bashir overthrew, judges still sentenced defendants under the hudud but held the punishments in abeyance because the laws were frozen.

Nobody has been sentenced under the hudud since Bashir's coup.

Public places are to close down for two hours every Friday to allow Muslims to do their noon prayer, according to a decree by Yousif Abdul Fattah, the deputy commissioner of this capital city.

The decree, broadcast on the national television Friday, said anyone failing to comply with the new order would be punished. Citing verses from the Koran, the decree said Muslims should stop doing business during the time of prayer.

Ex-minister's offer

A former Sudanese interior minister, living in exile since the June coup, said he was willing to return to Sudan and stand trial in a civil court.

Mubarak Al Mahdi was quoted by the Saudi-owned newspaper Al Sharq Al Awsat Saturday as saying: "I am ready to return to Sudan and stand trial if the government accepts the memorandum submitted by the judges and allows cases to be handled by the independent civil court."

He said allegations that the ousted Prime Minister Sadeq Al Mahdi's government was corrupt was "not based on any legal proof and their aim is political deception."

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Chinese foreign minister in Tehran

NICOSIA (R) — Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen has arrived in Tehran for a two-day official visit, the Iranian news agency IRNA said Saturday. Qian, who flew into the Iranian capital late Friday night, is returning a visit to Peking by Iran's Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati. It is Qian's second visit to Tehran since the 1979 revolution which toppled the Shah with whom China also maintained cordial relations. "Qian is to discuss issues of mutual interest and international developments with Iranian officials," IRNA received in Nicosia said. The Chinese minister told IRNA his visit was aimed at promoting closer links with Iran.

Ten smugglers hanged in Tehran

NICOSIA (AP) — Ten drug traffickers, including a woman, were hanged in Tehran's Qasr Prison Saturday morning, according to the official Islamic Republic News agency. IRNA, monitored in Nicosia, said the 10 were involved in repeated cases of smuggling, distribution and sale of narcotics, "operating at an international level." The agency said their drug trafficking operations included deals involving 1,160 kilograms of opium and eight kilograms of heroin. IRNA also said they had been involved in other "corrupt activities." The smugglers were tried by Tehran's Islamic revolutionary court which is in charge of the anti-narcotic campaign that was launched last December, the news agency reported. A law passed in January imposed the death sentence for the possession of even small quantities since the law passed. Drugs, which are illicitly produced in Iran, are also brought into Iran across its borders with Afghanistan and Pakistan.

4 Palestinians face trial in Sweden

STOCKHOLM (R) — Four men of Palestinian origin will go on trial Oct. 16 in Stockholm, charged with a series of bombings in northern Europe, court officials said Friday. A spokesman for prosecutor Stefan Karlmark said the four would be formally charged Monday with "serious destruction constituting a public danger." The trial is scheduled to begin the following week. The men are suspected of bombing the Copenhagen and Stockholm offices of U.S. airline Northwest Orient in 1985 and 1986, of blowing up a Copenhagen synagogue in 1985 and plotting other explosions in Amsterdam and at Israeli airline El Al's Copenhagen office. The four were among 15 people arrested in a night swoop last May. Police said they belonged to a militant Palestinian group, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command. Under Swedish law their names have been withheld.

Iranian Kurds say they blew up pipeline

BAGHDAD (R) — Kurdish rebels fighting the Tehran government said Friday they blasted an Iranian pipeline supplying Turkey with gas. A spokesman for the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI) said its guerrillas blew up the pipeline on Sept. 29 near the northwestern town of Mahabad. The damage was repaired within three days, he said. The spokesman also told Reuters in Baghdad that three members of the KDPI were executed in Mahabad Sept. 20 and their bodies handed to their families. He identified them as Nasser Shukra Rahman, Rashid Abbasi Mustapha and Khosro Kazemi Hamam Saleh and said they had all been in jail since 1986. The spokesman said KDPI fighters killed 10 Iranian soldiers, including a battalion commander based in the western town of Kermanshah, in an ambush on the Karand-Kermanshah road on Sept. 30.

Tunisian Islamic leader unwelcome

TUNIS (R) — Tunisian Islamic leader Sheikh Rached Ghannouchi was asked to leave Cairo because the authorities there considered that his presence was "undesirable," associates in Tunis said Friday. They told Reuters that the Egyptian authorities were irritated by remarks made by Ghannouchi at a conference on Islam and nationalism organised in Cairo last month by the Arab unity Studies Centre. Ghannouchi, who left Cairo Wednesday for Paris, has been touring countries in Asia and Europe since May. Before going to Egypt, he was received by Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi. His friends said he did not plan to return to Tunisia where his organisation Al Nahdha is not recognised by the government.

Sex stimulant Mideast drugs threat

ANKARA (R) — A drug widely abused as a sex stimulant is part of a growing drugs threat in the Middle East, a United Nations panel warned Friday. Arab Gulf consumption of the anti-depressant Fenetyline is soaring, Arab delegates told the 16-nation U.N. sub-commission on illicit drug traffic and related matters in the Near and Middle East. "Cannabis is still the most popular drug in the Arab World... (but) 52.6 million Fenetyline tablets have been seized between 1980 and 1988," said Hashem Al Qais of the pan-Arab Bureau for Narcotics Affairs. Turkish narcotics experts said Fenetyline, also known as Captagon, was used by Arab men as a sexual stimulant. A Saudi Arabian working paper said 3.14 million tablets were seized in Saudi Arabia alone in the year to August 1988. It said the source was an illicit factory in Bulgaria. The sub-commission urged on the U.N. Commission on Narcotic Drugs to call a special Congress to discuss skyrocketing use of Fenetyline, a drug subject to strict international controls since 1966. The sub-commission's four-day meeting brought together a powerful array of security and anti-drugs department chiefs from states including Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India.

Iraqi finance minister dismissed

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraqi Finance Minister Hikmat Omar Mukhlis was dismissed Saturday by Saddam Hussein. A presidential decree read over Baghdad Television gave no reasons for the move. Trade Minister Mohammad Mehdi Saleh was named acting finance minister. Mukhlis, who spent two years as finance minister, was reappointed as a government official in the Planning Ministry. His new post was not defined. A decree also said that acting Agriculture and Irrigation Minister Abdullah Bader Danouk, in office for only seven months, had lost his job and would become a teacher in the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research.

King: Jordan on threshold of new stage

(Continued from page 1)

security, youth affairs, housing and other areas.

Apart from the positive outcome, the past two decades yielded some adverse results like unemployment and the current financial and economic problem which require serious and careful handling by the real parliament.

The second factor, the King noted, concerns the various regional and international develop-

ments and their impact on national endeavours. He referred to the Iran-Iraq war which disrupted the march of construction and development in the Gulf region, and the Arab area at large; the Arab-Israeli conflict, which remains unresolved and the on-going uprising in the occupied Arab territories.

"Israel is still adamant and intransigent obstructing all peace efforts and trying to strike at Arab forces everywhere," the

King said. "This situation, he warned "calls for vigilance, cooperation and joint action on the part of the Arab countries to abort the enemy's plans and conspiracies."

He said that the superpowers had realised that confrontation can achieve nothing and opted for fruitful cooperation to resolve not only their own problems but, also regional conflicts.

"There is no doubt that a solution will be found for the Arab-

Israeli conflict," the King said. But, he warned "We ought to be well prepared and vigilant lest such solution could be at the expense of the Arab Nation..."

"Both voters and candidates in the coming parliamentary elections in Jordan shoulder a grave responsibility and should therefore seek a true democratic rule based on the tenets of the Constitution, avoiding rashness and extremism," King Hussein cautioned.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME ONE

15:30 Koran
15:40 Programme review
15:45 Children programme
17:10 Football
18:00 News summary in Arabic
18:05 Local programme
18:20 Give Me a Break
19:15 Local programme
19:40 Programme review
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Arabic series
21:40 Programme review
21:50 Local programme
22:40 Varieties programme
23:00 News summary in Arabic

PROGRAMME TWO

18:40 Loft story
18:50 L'écrit de l'été
19:00 News in French
19:15 Documentary
19:30 News in Hebrew
19:45 News in Arabic
20:00 Perfect Strangers
20:30 Doc. "Return to Peking"
21:10 News in English
22:00 Midnight Caller

PRAYER TIMES

06:12 Fajr
05:29 (Sunrise) Dhuha
11:23 Dhuhr

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swifflah, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Assumption Church Tel. 623666
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 771331
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Assyrian International Church Tel. 685326
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817 and 654932

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

A slight rise in temperature is expected and some clouds will appear at

low altitudes. Winds will be north-westerly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Atmosphere 11 / 25
Blood Bank 19 / 32
Deserts 10 / 27
Jordan Valley 20 / 32

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 24, Aqaba 31. Humidity readings: Amman 52 per cent, Aqaba 35 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Tawfiq Oshin 623029
Dr. Akram Samhan 894611
Dr. Jamal Abu Bakr 746426
Dr. Dr. Isam Abu Riza 681967
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 782536
Al Asana pharmacy 657055
Naironki pharmacy 623672
Al Salan pharmacy 636730
Yaacoub pharmacy 644945
Shamsani pharmacy 637660

IRBID:
Dr. Mohammad Al Shara'a (—)
Al Shara'a pharmacy (985238)

ZARQA:
Dr. Ghaleb Abu 'Eida (—)
Khalifeh pharmacy 983417

EMERGENCIES

Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341
Rescue 199
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 603021
Hotel Complaints 605800
Water and Sewerage 661176
Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 810230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Repairs 661101
Abdullah Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111

Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 815615
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power 636381
Company 08-53200
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khaldil Maternity, J. Amn 64281/6
Alkheh Maternity, J. Amn 64244/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
The Islamic, Abdali 665127/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 66417/4
Shamsani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Muhsin Hospital 66227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 665127/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664166/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 77101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 77511/26
Army, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602340/30
Amal Hospital 674155
IRBID:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)863323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)991071
In Sina Hospital (09)986732
ZARQA:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275
In Al Nafes Hospital (02)247100

AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)214111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53202-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

09:10 Jeddah (RJ)
09:10 Kuwait (RJ)
09:45 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
09:45 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
10:30 Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)
10:30 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:30 Paris (RJ)
17:30 Chicago, Vienna (RJ)
17:30 Cairo (RJ)
17:45 Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
17:55 Brussels, Frankfurt (RJ)
18:00 London (RJ)
19:45 Rome (RJ)
01:15 Baghdad (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

04:20 Dubai (AZ)
09:45 Athens (RJ)
12:20 Cairo (MS)
13:35 Sharjah, Doha (GF)
14:30 Kuwait (RJ)
15:45 Kuwait (LJ)
16:25 Baghdad (RJ)
19:25 Frankfurt (LH)
00:05 London (BA)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

10:45 Aqaba (RJ)
10:45 Rome (RJ)
11:30 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
11:30 Istanbul, Vienna (RJ)
12:30 Cairo, Aqaba (RJ)
19:40 Kuwait, Dhahran (RJ)
20:30 Baghdad (RJ)
20:30 Jeddah (SV)
20:30 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
21:15 Damascus (RJ)
21:15 Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ)
21:30 Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)
21:30 Sania (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

05:25 Rome (AZ)
09:00 Damascus, Paris (AF)
10:45 Athens (OA)
13:30 Cairo (MS)
15:45 Kuwait (RJ)
15:45 Doha, Bahrain (GF)
16:45 Tripoli (LN)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.
Apple (golden) 420 / 380
Apple (red) 330 / 300
Banana (Mekansur) 400 / 350
Banana (Mekansur) 320 / 280
Beans 180 / 100
Cabbage 150 / 120
Cauliflower 240 / 200
Corn 170 / 140
Cucumbers (large) 220 / 180
Cucumbers (small) 220 / 180
Dates 700 / 600
Eggplant 180 / 100
Fig 420 / 380
Garlic 900 / 800
Grapefruit 260 / 230
Grapes 340 / 300
Grapes (black) 340 / 300
Guava 400 / 350
Lemon 200 / 160
Mallow 140 / 100
Marrows 150 / 100
Marrow (small) 270 / 230
Okra 600 / 500
Onion (dry) 260 / 220
Pepper (hot) 150 / 120
Pepper (sweet) 150 / 120
Pomegranate 300 / 250
Potato 220 / 180
Spinach 220 / 180
Sweet Melon 300 / 250
Tomatoes 140 / 100
Water Melon 160 / 120

The identity factor in Nov. 8 elections

By Nermeen Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — While no-one would like to debate it in public, the issue lurks not very far below the surface, the intricacies of the "Jordanian" identity are very much at play in the race for the Nov. 8 elections. For some candidates it is a tool to scoop up votes while for most voters it is a touchy issue, given the unique nature of what is seen as the one Jordanian family regardless of roots and origins.

As the heat of the national elections grows, hatters are using different methods to discredit their rivals by casting doubts on their Jordanian nationalism citing family trees with roots elsewhere.

Others are using their roots to consolidate votes based on ethnic affiliation rather than credibility and ability. Between the two, some voters are facing a dilemma created by their own inability to draw a line, while others feel that their awareness will not allow them to be victimised by "these discriminatory ideas."

To the majority of would-be candidates, the issue of origin is something to be discussed with care, always differentiating between what "I personally think" and what "duty dictates" according to the seriousness of the proposal or philosophy.

"As far as I am concerned, this jingoism between the east Jordanian and Jordanians of Palestinian origin is unacceptable," a candidate who plans to run in one of the capital's districts told the Jordan Times.

Publicly, all candidates lay claim to the Palestinian problem and envision patriotic solutions to the over 40-year-old issue. "Palestine is not for Palestinians alone. They cannot reserve the privilege of determination to all Arabs and Muslims. We want to liberate all of Palestine and will not accept any other solution," said a would-be candidate at an open debate held in Amman.

But in a private interview with the Jordan Times, the same candidate criticised candidates of Palestinian origin for their endeavours to enter into the Jordanian parliament. "We cannot have a strong Palestinian presence in our Jordanian parliament. It would validate (hawkish Israeli minister Ariel) Sharon's claim that Jordan is a substitute homeland."

The discussion now in the election circles rotates around what would "impose" the "alternate homeland" concept on Jordan, while some think that it would be "de facto situation whereby there would be a mass exodus of Palestinians into Jordan and then population ratios would dilute the Palestinian identity in the occupied territories". Others maintain that regardless of the situation "Palestinians would never accept a homeland other than Palestine."

A political analyst said the idea of an "alternate homeland" cannot crystallise "unless there were major retreats in the political ideologies of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) which are coupled by a feeling among Palestinians that there is nothing to gain from holding on to the Palestinian identity and the right of return."

Only if the above combination materialised "would the Palestinian people be ready to dissolve within the folds of any country," he adds.

The strongest debate on this issue was triggered by the decision of some West Bank deputies in the now-dissolved Lower House of Parliament to run again as representatives of cities in the East Bank.

These candidates, when contacted by the Jordan Times on this issue, maintain that they "represented the West Bank cities when they were considered the occupied West Bank of Jordan," and since Jordan has severed legal and administrative ties with the West Bank, according to the wishes of the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. "We reserve our right to run in Jordan as representatives of cities in what is

"It has to be understood in all clarity, and without any ambiguity or equivocation, that our measures regarding the West Bank, concern only the occupied Palestinian land and its people. They naturally do not relate in any way to the Jordanian citizens of Palestinian origin in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. They all have the full rights of citizenship and all its obligations, the same as any other citizen irrespective of his origin. They are an integral part of the Jordanian state. They belong to it, they live on its land and they participate in its life and all its activities."

"The constructive plurality which Jordan has lived since its foundation, and through which it has witnessed progress and prosperity in all aspects of life, emanates not only from our faith in the sanctity of national unity, but also in the importance of Jordan's pan-Arab role."

His Majesty King Hussein July 31, 1988

now considered the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Although many candidates and public figures are eager to stress that this jingoism is "not typical of the citizens of this country." Others have used it to create more controversy, apparently thinking that they will be able to transcend the predominant awareness among the constituencies on this particular issue.

"I have even heard that some are saying that Jordanians of Palestinian origin should not even vote," a candidate addressing a predominantly Palestinian-oriented constituency said.

But his attempt to "change colours according to the shades among the audience" as one described it, was met with resentment from the people attending the "informal gathering."

"I cannot believe that this man is spreading rumours of something which was probably said by a very small minority which does not affect the outcome of the votes nor reflects the tendencies among the people," a listener at the meeting said.

One candidate echoed the feeling among many Jordanians. "I carry my love, endeavours and my insistence to liberate Palestine and I carry my sincerest allegiance for this dear Arab land in which I was born and where my personality was crystallised, and I do not see a contradiction between these two sentiments," he says.

Another candidate, of Palestinian origin, said that the years of his life which he spent in Amman "are an extension of the years which I spent in my village in Palestine. My allegiance to Palestine when it is being discussed and my allegiance to Jordan when it is discussed are not contradictory, and anyone who tries to highlight a contradiction is harming Jordan, Palestine and the Arab World."

To admit that this jingoism exists, according to a candidate running in the second district in the capital, "is to admit that there is a social and political sickness."

He maintained that "when we talk of highlighting the Palestinian identity, the only acceptable form is to do that in the face of the Israeli enemy, but never in the face of another Arab state."

In Jordan, as the zero hour of elections draws nearer, a formula for the participation of candidates of Palestinian origin is dissolving based on mathematical equation based on percentages to a formula of nationalism and patriotism.

"The number of candidates who are originally from this place or that is now only a matter of detail. What is important is that to ensure that Jordan enjoys the support of nationalists and the allegiance of all Jordanians who live on this soil and that Palestine enjoys the support of this country with which it has unique relations which are stronger than any which connect it with any other Arab nation," a candidate summed it up.

Economic Council restructured

By Suhair Obeidat
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Economic Consultative Council was revamped Saturday with the prime minister and deputy prime minister as chairman and the deputy prime minister and interior minister, the ministers of finance, planning and agriculture and the Central Bank of Jordan governor as members from the government side.

According to a decision taken by the Council of Ministers, which held a regular session Saturday under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Sharif Zaid Ben Shakar, the private sector will be represented in the council by Amman Chamber of Industry Chairman

Khaldoun Abu Hassan, Chamber of Commerce Chairman Ali Abu Ragheb, Leith Shbeilat and Zahrah Khouri.

The council can form technical committees to help it in studying the issues referred to it by the prime ministry.

"This comes as a step towards enhancing the relations between the public and private sectors to accomplish the goals of comprehensive development as well as to strengthen the new role that encourages saving and investment in moving economic facilities," said Minister of Information Nasouh Al Majali, briefing reporters after the cabinet session at the prime ministry.

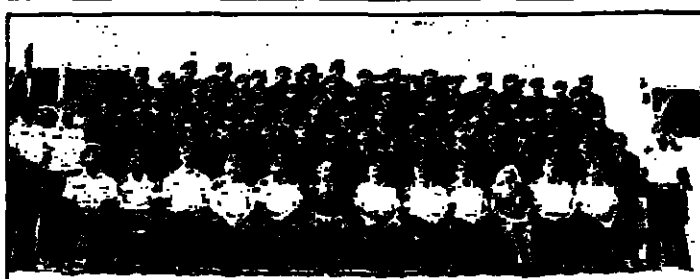
The council will also function as

a "forum for free dialogue between the two sectors in all economic affairs," Majali said.

Another decision taken by the cabinet Saturday reduced the permissible free local calls per telephone subscriber to 1,000 from the present 2,000. The duration per each call remained at six minutes.

The cabinet also decided to appoint Ibrahim Shehadeh as director of Radio Jordan to succeed Raf'e Shahin, who was appointed production consultant at the radio.

Saturday marked the first day of a newly-introduced government move to brief local and foreign reporters after every cabinet meeting.



Police College graduates Saturday pose for a commemorative photograph with His Highness Prince Ra'd and PSD chief Fadel Ali Fuhaid.

PSD chief, Prince Ra'd attend police graduation

AMMAN (Petra) — The Public Security Department Director Major-General Fadel Ali Fuhaid Saturday attended the graduation of the 8th police training course for university graduates and engineers.

Graduating from this course were Their Royal Highnesses Prince Ghazi Ibn Mohammad and Prince Zaid Ibn Ra'd Ibn Zaid.

Addressing the graduation ceremony which was held at the Police Training College, Maj. Gen. Fuhaid said that the human element constitutes the basis for realising the public security philosophy and modernising the police service.

Fuhaid called for innovation, novelty and departure from the traditional work. He also called on the graduates to be faithful to the noble message they undertook to carry out, to ensure that Jordan will remain an oasis of security and stability, as His Majesty King Hussein wanted it.

The ceremony was attended by Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ibn Zaid, assistant Public Security Director for manpower and a number of public security officers.

NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

KING CONGRATULATES E. GERMANY: His Majesty King Hussein Saturday sent a cable to the East German President Erich Honecker, congratulating him on his country's National Day and wishing him continued good health and happiness and the East German people further progress and prosperity. (Petra)

CHARITY BAZAAR: Under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Zein Al Sharaf, the diplomatic corps accredited to the Royal Hashemite Court holds a charity bazaar Sunday, Oct. 8 at Al Hussein Youth City. Proceeds from the bazaar will benefit Mabarat Um Al Hussein. (J.T.)

LAWZI RECEIVES OUTGOING JAPANESE ENVOY: Upper House of Parliament Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi Saturday discussed with the outgoing Japanese Ambassador to Jordan Makoto Watanabe scopes of existing cooperation in all fields, with main focus on the parliamentary affairs. Watanabe called at the House of Parliament to bid farewell to Lawzi at the end of his tour of duty in Jordan. (Petra)

EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS: Under the patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Wijdan Ali, the French Cultural Centre, in cooperation with the Royal Cultural Centre, holds an exhibition of paintings entitled "Multiple Regards"—Lithographs of the greatest artists: Picasso, Matisse, Miró, Braque, Cézanne and Le Corbusier. The exhibition will be held at the Royal Cultural Centre on Monday, Oct. 9 (J.T.)

ABU TALEB RECEIVES LIBYAN LEADER: Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Fathi Abu Taleb Saturday received the Libyan Revolutionary Command Council Member, Major-Al Khuwelidi Al Humeidi and reviewed with him the general situation in the region and issues of mutual interest. The meeting was attended by the assistant Chief of Staff for intelligence and the inspector general. (Petra)

JORDAN, JAPAN SIGN ACCORD: Jordan and Japan Saturday signed an agreement at the Royal Scientific Society (RSS) renewing scientific and technological cooperation. According to the agreement, the Japanese government will grant the RSS Electronic Services and Training Centre additional equipment worth 50 million yen. The agreement also provides for dispatching experts and employees from the centre to Japan to undergo training. The agreement was signed by RSS President Dr. Hani Mulki and Reita Ishii from the Japanese Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications. Ishii arrived in Amman on Sept. 30 at the head of a four-member delegation to discuss scopes of cooperation. (Petra)

RSCN DIRECTOR RETURNS FROM TURKEY: Director of the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN) Ja'afar Abu Halimeh returned home Saturday after a week-long visit to Turkey, during which he held talks with Turkish officials on means of cementing cooperation in wildlife protection. (Petra)

WORKSHOP ON POPULAR GAMES FOR CHILDREN: Queen Alia Jordan Social Welfare Fund (QAF) Saturday held a workshop on making popular games for children at Nuzha Social Services Centre. Head of the children's programmes at the fund said that the workshop aims to encourage the production of popular educational games for children from materials readily available in the local markets. She pointed out that play is a basic element for the mental, psychological, emotional and social development of the child. Taking part in the workshop, which was organised on the eve of Jordan's celebrations of the Arab Child Day, were 50 children and 21 supervisors. (Petra)

RSS TAKES PART IN RESEARCH MEETING: The Royal Scientific Society will take part in the Scientific Research Council's 5th conference, due to be held in Baghdad from Oct. 7 to 11. Representing the RSS in this five-day event is Daoud Jabaji, the advisor to the RSS President. Jabaji will present a scientific research on building materials and construction engineering. In a statement to Petra, Jabaji said that conference aims at enhancing scientific research in the Arab World and to ensure the interaction among Arab researchers through the exchange of views and expertise in the areas of science and technology. A total of 600 scientific research pieces will be submitted to the conference. (J.T.)

NEW PRICE FOR FISH: A kilogramme of amrouni fish will be sold from now on at the rate of 770 fils down from 875 fils, according to a decision by Minister of Supply Ibrahim Ayyoub. The decision takes effect as of Oct. 7. (Petra)

The 'sewage express' fat affair — the meltdown

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Writer

AMMAN — One hundred and thirteen people suspected of involvement in smuggling, selling and buying unprocessed raw fat in Jordan have been sent to the military court for trial after extensive police questioning, according to an official source.

The source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said 10 other suspects were at large and "most of them are believed to be outside the country."

Details of the case of "sewage express fat," as it came to be known when it hit the headlines early last month, are expected to be fully known only after the suspects are tried. However, it has raised a public hue and cry and sparked fears that every other local product might contain unprocessed oil; adding insult to injury was the revelation that the fat was transported in sewage trucks.

For many, the thin drawing line between "unfit for human consumption but not posing hazards to human health if consumed" — the official verdict of the Ministry of Health — is not very clear. Furthermore, many are indignant over the possibility that the smuggling was going for "quite some time," exposing the public to unknown health hazards.

Investigations have thrown light into many of the shady aspects of the affair, the first of its kind to hit Jordan and publicised in recent history, but no official confirmation is available yet on many of the perceived angles.

According to the source, the "trials should start very soon" and the authorities are anxious "to ensure a quick process of the law." The names of all those found guilty by the military court will be published, the source added.

Other informed sources contacted by the Jordan Times said the suspects included drivers of tankers which were used to carry raw fat from Aqaba to Iraq, drivers and owners of sewage trucks which were used to transport and distribute the fat siphoned off from the Aqaba-Iraq-Aqaba tankers and owners and officials of 42 commercial establishments — food stuff producers as well as detergent and soap manufacturers. It is also believed that municipal employees who have had access to sewage trucks owned by municipalities are among those to be tried.

Though it is widely believed that some of the plants producing popular brands of potato chips, confectioneries, pastry shops, bakeries and restaurants are involved in the affair, the extent of the local use of the smuggled fat is not clear yet. The official source asserted that "there are no known cases of poisoning caused" by the smuggled substance. The authorities have announced that 14 commercial firms were closed down after having found that they were using raw fat unfit for human consumption.

According to the source, although consumption of contaminated potato chips was found to be behind a "food poisoning" case involving over 100 schoolgirls in Ajloun last week, it has not been established that the product contained the smuggled raw fat. Meanwhile, inquiries made by the Jordan Times unfolded a very telling story behind the entire "sewage express fat" affair. The details obtained by the newspaper are not officially confirmed, but came from reliable sources.

Information available to the Jordan Times indicates that: There was no "organised group" as such behind the diabolical scheme. Individuals who operated on their own but following almost identical patterns were involved.

Origins of the fat
The raw fat — unprocessed vegetable oil — that surfaced in

Jordan came from one of many large consignments destined for Iraqi importers and originated in the Far East, more specifically, Malaysia. The particular consignment in question was carried to Aqaba by a large tanker and then, as is the usual practice, transferred to the holds of two Iraqi-owned tankers permanently berthed at the port — Al Kirkuk and Al Karamah — in June of this year. From the two smaller tankers, the fat was pumped to tanker-trucks with an average capacity of 40 to 45 tonnes each and transported to Iraq under an agreement between the Iraqis and a Jordanian transport company.

The transport arrangement was part of a bilateral agreement entered at the beginning of the Gulf war when Iraqi ports were forced to close down and the Iraqis started using the Jordanian port as the main conduit for their imports.

The Jordanian transport firm sub-contracted individual tanker-owners who cleaned and converted their fuel tankers to carry "edible oil." The tankers were previously used to transport Iraqi crude to Aqaba for exports, but business had "waned in the wake of the opening of a major Iraqi oil pipeline to the Saudi Red Sea port of Yanbu. A majority of these trucks carries hence plates from the Arab Gulf states but owned by Jordanians.

The onward shipment of raw fat from the holds of Al Kirkuk and Al Karamah to Iraq was dictated by the requirements of Iraqi processing plants. The regular practice was that as and when tanker-trucks were loaded with raw fat they were weighed at a weighbridge facility in Aqaba by Iraqi officials and then given a manifest with clearance for their trip to Iraq, where almost all of the consignments were taken in by one of the biggest confectionery manufacturers.

Weighing loophole

It appears that the entire smuggling operation may perhaps owe its origins to the absence of weighbridge facilities at the Iraqi plant; it had no means to verify the exact quantity of fat delivered by individual trucks and had to go by the weight mentioned in the manifest issued at Aqaba. This enabled tanker drivers to hold back an average of five to seven tonnes per truck from delivery but obtain an "all delivered" document from the company.

When the tankers returned to Jordan they were in fact carrying part of the original consignments (it is not clear how they managed to escape detection by the Jordanian customs authorities on the Iraqi-Jordanian border). The tankers would then proceed to prearranged points in the desert and, possibly, to some vehicle service stations on the highway between the Iraqi border and Amman to transfer the "cargo" to sewage trucks. Obviously, sewage trucks, a very common sight in Amman's streets, particularly in areas where there is no centralised sewerage network, were used so as to escape suspicion. (Who will think of opening and peering into a sewage truck to inspect its "contents"?)

The "sewage expresses" — a local nickname for the distinct yellow vehicles owned by municipal authorities as well as private operators — were the main conduit for the distribution of the smuggled fat in the country.

However, there is no indication that the vehicles were driven directly to consuming factories for unloading their cargo. Eighteen barrels of raw fat were discovered at a deserted house on the Sweileh-Wadi Seer road in the second week of September, shortly before the authorities announced the arrest of 95 people. The discovery indicated that at least part of the spurious substance was transferred to barrels and, pos-

sibly, other containers before delivery to buyers.

'Accidents' and 'missing cargo'

In late July, one tanker carrying 45 tonnes of raw fat destined for Iraq was reportedly involved in an "accident." According to its driver, the vehicle was overturned and a good part of the fat was lost. But, inquiries failed to establish the "accident" and the driver was arrested. Again, a few days later, another tanker was reported "missing" after leaving Aqaba but was located 24 hours later in a service station in the area but without the fat. The story was again of the new familiar "accident." Some officials believe that it was the first time that a driver had sold the entire quantity right in Jordan without going through the exercise of driving to Iraq and smuggling back part of the cargo on the return leg. But some others say that some of the drivers used to sell part of their consignment before crossing the border to Iraq.

In the wake of the "loss" of the two tankers, the Jordanian transport company is believed to have paid an undisclosed sum to the Iraqis as compensation for the "missing cargo."

Extensive questioning of the two arrested drivers led to further details of the pattern of the smuggling operations and authorities kept a close vigil on movements of raw fat tankers heading for Iraq. Soon, by the second week of September, they managed to spring a net and nab over 80 suspects.

There have also been suggestions that the Iraqi authorities had tipped off their Jordanian counterparts after discovering the smuggling operations from the other side of the border.

According to official statements, the total quantity of smuggled raw fat seized in Jordan is 350 tonnes. No estimate is available for the total quantity that could possibly have been involved in the entire operation, but at least 2,000 tonnes of raw fat have been listed by the Iraqis as "missing in transit" between Aqaba and Iraq in the last nine months.

The Iraqi use of Aqaba port for its imports of raw fat started in 1985. No definite figures are immediately available for the total amount of raw fat that the Iraqis imported through Aqaba since then.

The average selling price of the smuggled fat was around JD 200 a tonne, while pure fat imported through proper channels was sold around JD 750 a tonne in the open market, prompting authorities to assert that it is inconceivable that the buyers were unaware of the actual nature of the substance. Furthermore, a Health Ministry official said, "the very appearance of the substance is suspicious."

The argument that raw fat did not "pose any health hazards" will not work in favour of the defendants in court since regulations stipulate that anyone found selling food stuff "unfit for human consumption" is liable for prosecution for "threatening public health and security." Furthermore, they also face charges of contravening customs regulations and evading payment of customs duties. However, the exact technical nature of the charges against them is not known, whether sellers or buyers, but buyers of "contraband" goods are also liable for prosecution.

In the meantime, an Islamic group has sent an appeal to the prime minister demanding that those found guilty in the case be hanged for "posing a grave threat to public health." No immediate comment was available from the authorities over the issue.

AN official said the authorities were withholding the names of the suspects in the case since "some of them could be guilty by association rather than participation, and some others may be proven innocent by the martial law court."

"Under the circumstances," he said, "it is only fair that only the names of those convicted by the court be released to the public."

One of the focal points raised by many in any discussion of the affair is whether any "big fish" is involved. Some of the sources who spoke to the Jordan Times would only say that "the very publication of the names of those involved is in itself a bigger punishment, both socially and financially, than any prison term."

Badran calls for preparing qualified, competent teachers

AMMAN (Petra) — Education Minister Adnan Badran Saturday said that the educational process requires a qualified and competent teacher, capable of inculcating positive values and developing skills of students and enhancing their true belonging.

Addressing headmasters of the Second Educational Zone of Greater Amman Municipality, at a meeting held in Abdoun Girls Secondary School, Badran said that the success and development of any educational institution hinges on the ability of its management to run it effectively.

However, he noted, the school administration "should shoulder the responsibility for creating an integrated pioneering school, that can serve as a pioneering centre for the students and the society."

He called on the management of the school to provide the right atmosphere for both the pupils and the teachers in order to ensure their good performance.

The minister said that all the educational channels will be opened vertically, thus giving each student the opportunity to join universities in accordance with his or her grades.

Jordan Times
Tel: 667171

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ An exhibition of watercolours on Jordan by Salam Kansan at Al Wasiti Art Gallery.
- ★ An exhibition of Islamic scripts at Jordan National Gallery for Fine Arts.
- ★ An art exhibition entitled "Nature and Man" by Jordanian artist Mohammed Al Haidi at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ An exhibition marking the 1st centennial of the Eiffel Tower displaying photographs, drawings and pictures demonstrating the tower in all its aspects at the French Cultural Centre.

BAZAAR

- ★ A charity bazaar for Mabarrat Um Al Hussein at Al Hussein Youth City — 11:00 a.m.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1972.

جوردين تايمز يومية عربية سياسية مستقلة تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية

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The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.
Subscription and advertising rates are available from the
Jordan Times Advertising Department.

Shamir's foot-dragging

IT MAY come to pass that Shamir's foot-dragging over Egypt's 10-point initiative will come to an end and a Palestinian-Israeli dialogue will finally begin in spite of rejection of the idea by Israel at this point in time. For all those who will rejoice once this much-talked-about dialogue gets officially launched, a grim reminder is in order: The American-Palestinian dialogue has been going on for almost a year and has yet to produce the desired breakthrough. And if this American-Palestinian dialogue has yet to produce anything tangible, how can one expect the projected Israeli-Palestinian dialogue to bear fruit? After all, in spite of the immediate rallying by Washington behind Israel's point of view, it is still not the direct party involved in the conflict. Accordingly, it would seem more probable than not that the sought-after Israeli-Palestinian dialogue will likewise be open-ended with no breakthrough in sight. Meanwhile much valuable time would go down the drain and the entire peace process will willy-nilly come to naught, so it seems.

All this gloom and doom could change once the outer parameters of the solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict can be agreed upon in principle before the dialogue gets started. Later on, the meetings between the two parties would develop their own momentum and create their own inertia for additional accommodations and compromises. So once the preliminary negotiations between the principal protagonists in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict get going, it will not be easy to stop them even if instant breakthrough does not loom in the horizon for fear that a deadlock would spell catastrophes for both sides. It goes without saying that failure in such talks would leave the two sides with no option except to escalate their differences to the point of no return.

Thus, all concerned parties have a vested interest in getting the Palestinian-Israeli dialogue going, but they also have a greater interest in having such dialogue come to fruition. For the Palestinian side, the intended dialogue with their Israeli counterparts is the litmus paper which will determine which way the intifada should proceed. For the Israeli side, such negotiations, albeit preliminary, would force them to negotiate in good faith under the glare of international opinion, both public and private. This could explain why Shamir is foot-dragging on President Hosni Mubarak's plan to have the Israelis and Palestinians talking to one another instead of fighting.

JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

THE Palestinian intifada enters its 23rd month Sunday as the Palestinians show unwavering determination to pursue the struggle for freedom, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Saturday. The uprising which is designed to regain usurped Arab territories is being continuously confronted by Israel's intransigence and repressive measures, the paper noted. It said that the Likud bloc yesterday announced its rejection of the Egyptian-sponsored plan of holding a Palestinian-Israeli dialogue which is intended as a first step towards reviving the peace process. Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli defence minister issued new instructions to his forces to break the bones of all those who take part in any anti-Israeli riots, the paper continued. It said that the new development is bound to win Israel further condemnation from the world community, but will never put an end to the ongoing intifada. Israeli troops will no doubt continue firing indiscriminately, killing or wounding Arab people and will continue imposing heavy taxes on the local population, but they will never succeed in evicting the Palestinians from their homeland, the paper added. It is clear, said Al Ra'i, that these actions are intended to help Israel avoid peace initiatives and the idea of reaching a permanent settlement for the Arab-Israeli conflict.

A columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic daily on Saturday attacks the Soviet Union for condoning a Zionist-American conspiracy of absorbing three million Soviet Jews in Israel. Fahd Al Rimawi says that while the Arabs remain impassive about the news, the Israelis are making ready to absorb the newcomers whose settlement in the occupied Arab territories will be financed by the United States. The writer notes that the Soviet Union, which is now adopting a vague foreign policy, is not showing any objection to the move, and also not displaying any concern over Arab interests. The supply of three million Jews to Israel is a very dangerous development, since Israel has always lacked sufficient manpower to help it carry out its ambitious plans in the Arab area, the writer notes. The newcomers, the writer adds, will raise to eight million the number of Jews in Palestine, and will corroborate Israel's occupation of Arab lands. The writer blames the Arab Nation's weakness for this development and calls on Arab masses to beware of the new conspiracy.

Al Dustour daily newspaper Saturday commented on Israel's rejection of the Egyptian-sponsored peace plan, describing such position as sheer intransigence and stubbornness that impedes all peace efforts. The paper said that Israel, which refuses to recognise the rights of the Palestinian people, rejects any lasting settlement for the Arab-Israeli conflict with the hope of achieving further gains through more aggression, relying on its military force. The Likud bloc which governs the Israeli society is still holding on to outdated and futile plans, and maintaining the iron-fist policy against the Palestinians and trying by all means to settle Jews on Arab land, the paper noted. It said that against Israel's intransigence and continued occupation of Arab land the international community has done nothing, but the United States has done all in its power to bolster the Israeli stand through continued military and economic assistance to the Zionist state.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

Any room for more banks?

DO WE have more banks than we reasonably need as some voices suggest? Did we exceed the limit in the licensing of insurance companies? Are we saturated when it comes to industrial enterprises? These are legitimate questions that can be asked, and should find convincing answers.

My own answer to the first question is: No, there is still plenty of room in the market for more commercial banks and financial companies. My answer to the second question is: Yes, because we established a huge number of insurance companies to serve a very small market. The third question, however, could not be answered, or even asked, because industry is so diverse that industrial companies, unlike banks and insurance companies, do not compete directly against each other, except in certain limited subsectors.

But first we should agree on the yardstick by which we can determine whether we have too much or too little or just the right number of any given type of enterprise. There are many methods for measurement, but the worse and least meaningful is the one that considers the volume of the business, and the number of companies or branches.

The right criteria to judge scarcity or over-saturation is profitability and the rate of return on the invested capital. If the

rate of return in a given sector is high, or higher than the average rate of return prevailing in other economic sectors, then one can safely conclude that the number of units, operating in that sector, is not excessive. Such high return suggests that there is room for expansion, until the rate of return declines to become equal to the overall average return of capital invested elsewhere in the economy, after allowing for the varied degree of risk involved.

Using this approach we find that the profitability of banks in Jordan was always higher, on average, than the country's prevailing average. This tells us that we are not in any way overbanked, and that the licensing of yet more banks may be justified, especially if the new banking units were meant to specialise in certain activities.

By the same token we find that Jordan is over saturated with insurance companies. A fact that forced insurance companies to merge by the strength of law, as an exception to the freedom of economic and investment decision-making.

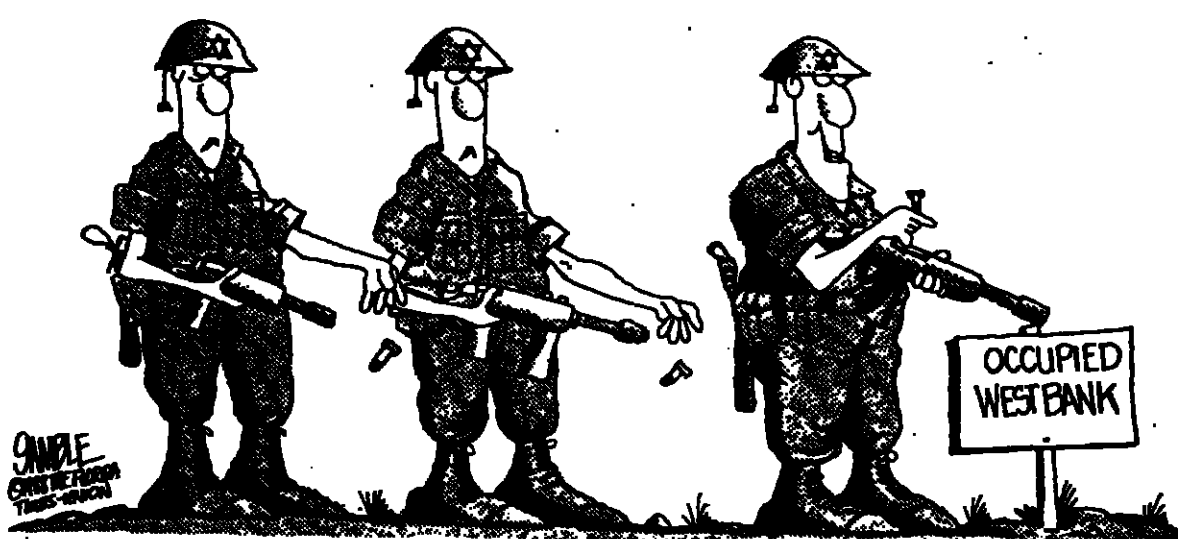
In the field of manufacturing companies, no one can pass an overall judgment. We may have excessive capacity in the production of certain commodities such as plastics or paints, but we may be lacking in the areas of clothes, foodstuffs, and shoes. Even this tentative judgment is based on the assumption that

the domestic market is the only target for all production activities. This is not true. Exporting makes any volume of production of a given service or commodity possible and feasible in the light of the competitiveness in export markets. Therefore the tens of watch factories in Switzerland may not be excessive as long as Swiss watches are produced and directed to export markets. The ideal capacity to produce watches in Switzerland can only be determined by the industry's competitiveness in comparison with the Japanese products in price and quality.

In this sense, surplus banks, insurance companies or factories are those which are not sufficiently efficient, or unable to produce the commodity or service at an economic cost.

In a market-oriented economy, we don't need to worry about too much or too less of any particular activity. Competition, profitability and feasibility will persuade or dissuade investors towards an economic activity or another. But that needs free entry to, and exit from, the market, a condition not met in our case, where the government thinks that its duty is to block the way of newcomers who may like to start new businesses such as banks, and to prevent old and weak enterprises from dying, through artificial rescue operations involving the injection of public funds or sending good money after bad.

By Dr. Fahed Faneek



MEANWHILE... ISRAEL MAKES ANOTHER MAJOR DECISION ON HOW TO DEAL WITH THE PALESTINIANS!!

'The Austrian model could be a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict'

By Aryeh Green

SINCE THE INTIFADA brought the Palestinians and the Israelis out of their status-quo stupor, the arguments over the Palestinian problem have reached fever pitch. Proposals have been made for all sorts of "solutions" — transfer, autonomy, federation, annexation and statehood — each one with a political movement to back it and writers from various backgrounds to promote it.

Why, then, are so many people missing the point? Palestinians (and their worldwide supporters) demand "self-determination" in the form of a state in the territories administered by Israel since 1967. Most Israelis (and their American supporters) demand that the territories be kept under Israeli control, with some measure of independence for the Palestinians living there.

Both these positions are unrealistic. Most calls for a Palestinian state are untenable in their implications for Israel's security. A Palestinian state in "all of Palestine" — as demanded by the PLO charter and the most extreme Palestinian groups even today — is unacceptable because it means the elimination of Israel as a political entity. A Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza — as proposed by Yasser Arafat and more "moderate" Arab leaders — threatens Israel as a potentially hostile neighbour.

Extremist Israeli proposals for annexation, transfer and continued Israeli dominance in the territories fail even to recognise the Palestinians' aspirations to independence. At the same time, the "moderate" Israeli parties' calls for federation, equal rights and autonomy, while acknowledging these aspirations, fall short of meeting them.

What is needed is a new concept: a proposal which will satisfy the Palestinian desire for political self-expression while at the same time fulfilling the Israeli need for real security. The concept of "limited sovereignty" serves both these purposes, is theoretically sound and has a number of historical precedents that prove its efficacy.

There are many who deny the Palestinians any right to a national identity; yet they have forged one identity during the past generations. The concept of a Palestinian state, therefore, has some validity. Their right to political self-expression has been recognised even by the Israelis, if only implicitly, under the rubric of proposed "autonomy" regimes.

However, for the Palestinians to take this right and jump across decades of virulent anti-Israeli demagoguery and terrorist violence to demand the immediate establishment of a sovereign state in the territories is sheer *chutzpa*. Hav-

ing categorically rejected the idea ever since the U.N. partition plan of 1947, the Arabs cannot expect Israel to allow such a state to be set up on its almost indefensible borders simply because they have decided it is the best they can hope for.

The Israelis need more than a simple assurance of good intentions to calm their fears of placing themselves in a vulnerable position. When Syrian, Iraqi, Libyan and Iranian intentions are taken into consideration, these fears seem more than justified.

Yet courage is needed to overcome our fears in the face of what seems to be a logical and historical imperative, that of the post-World War II replacement of hegemonic power politics by national liberation movements.

The Palestinians, or Arabs of the Land of Israel, are here; they are a sizeable minority in the territory between the river and the sea, with distinct language, cultural and religious differences from the majority. If we Israelis, as "Westerners," applaud the Baltic republics' surge towards independence, if we support an independent Kurdistan, if we at all uphold the principle of man's right to define himself as he likes and his own affairs, we are obligated to recognise the Palestinians as a representation of this same phenomenon.

The historical analogy of Europe has been offered before. France and Germany, enemies for over seven centuries, capitalised on their shared cultural and political traditions to form a lasting partnership within 20 years of a cataclysmic confrontation. An even better parallel presents itself in the example of Austria, the one anomaly of a modern Europe rent by mutually exclusive treaty organisations, NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

When Europe was being "partitioned" by the victorious Allies, Austria fell between the cracks: occupied by both Soviet and American troops, considered geographically within the Soviet sphere of influence but politically and socially part of the "West," Austria fitted into no neat mould. In the end, the Allies decided to free Austria from the burdens of occupation and yet ensure her future non-belligerence in a unique way: restoring her sovereignty, but severely limiting it in two ways.

First, Austria was not (and still is not) permitted to join any treaty organisation, nor to sign any pact of mutual defence or alliance. Second, she was forbidden to raise a standing army; her police and civil defence institutions were strictly defined to restrict her ability to wage war against her neighbours. Austria's own security was provided for by

the pledge of both the Soviet Union and the United States to protect and defend her sovereignty.

This unique arrangement served two very important purposes. By allowing the Austrians to retain all the trappings of sovereign statehood and full responsibility for their domestic policy, the Allies returned them their dignity following the defeat of their beloved neighbour and ally. And by limiting and controlling Austria's foreign and defence policy options, the Allies assured themselves of the security they fought the war to achieve.

Austria was and is a sovereign state, according to international law, in the eyes of the world and, most important, in the eyes of her citizens.

This perceptual element is of crucial relevance to our predicament. With over a decade of talk about autonomy, federations and the like, the Palestinians have come to distrust and reject anything short of what they believe to be their right to "full independence."

This is unfortunate and mistaken. The Austrians, like the Japanese and the Germans, accepted that the facts on the ground and the history of their conflict dictated a certain circumspection in their demand for immediate independence from their occupiers. More importantly, they had no fears of never regaining their independence, nor subconscious doubts about their ability to govern themselves. Furthermore, the Austrians possessed acknowledged leaders who both handled negotiations with the Allied occupation authorities and who stood as symbols of the rebirth of their nation.

Sovereignty, with or without an army, was taken for granted by Austrians in a way not even comprehensible to today's Palestinians. The latter are suspicious of limitations on their freedom of manoeuvre. Their suspicions, like the Israeli fears mentioned above, must not be allowed to blind them to the only real chance to take a step towards their cherished goal of independence.

The theoretical concept of "limited sovereignty" is a sound one. Full domestic independence, and status as a full-fledged state in the international arena, combined with specific limitations on armed forces and alliance formation, grant the Palestinians their very legitimate right to self-expression, and grant the Israelis their equally legitimate right to real security.

In our particular situation, there is a need for more than the "guarantors" of Austrian non-alliance and independence.

Europe in 1945 was dominated by two hegemonic powers who could and did dictate policy to regional actors: the Middle East, for better or for worse, is full of all-too-independent actors. And Austria's neighbours and the Allies, for all their fears of renewed aggression on her part, never feared for their own existence. Four million Israelis have reason to harbour existential fears until peace is offered them by the 20 million people surrounding them.

Knowing that a continuation of Israeli dominance is just what the Palestinians loathe about the various autonomy proposals, perhaps there is a role for a consortium of "partners" — a group of states, including Israel, to serve as guarantors of Palestinian independence and peacefulness. Who those partners or "overseers" are is not important at this juncture. The point is that such a concept can work, and has worked, and has been instrumental in preserving and promoting peace between enemies for four decades now — and is the only "solution" to our current dilemma which satisfies both parties' needs and demands. For Israel: security; for the Palestinians: sovereignty.

In the long term, there is no way of telling what would develop out of such an arrangement. Would the Palestinians turn towards the West, align themselves philosophically with Egypt, pull Jordan and Saudi Arabia towards accommodation (even, dare one suggest, cooperation) with Israel? Or would they allow another Lebanon to occur, with Ahmed Jibril, Abu Jihad, George Habash and unknown others vying with our venerable nemesis Mr. Arafat for control of the burgeoning state, turning the whole experiment on its head? And would the Palestinians (or, for that matter, the Israelis) be content?

Such a solution — creating a Palestinian state in the territories which cannot threaten Israel — does not ignore Palestinian aspirations to return to Haifa, or Jewish/Israeli religious and historical rights to Judea and Samaria. Rather, it relegates such concerns to the back burner of local politics as impractical and inappropriate given political reality.

As for the special case of Jerusalem, perhaps some arrangement of dual sovereignty will be worked out, pointing to the day when both Palestinians and Israelis will realise that the land is God's — when His sovereignty will be acknowledged, the security of all of us guaranteed, and no one will care to whom we pay our taxes or who arranges our garbage collection — The Jerusalem Post.

Power battle in a sea of corruption

By Martin Walker

ALTHOUGH there was no immediate evidence of U.S. involvement in Oct. 3 military insurrection against General Noriega, the surprise was less that the attempted coup had happened, than that Washington's wishes should have been frustrated for so long.

Panama was the third Central American country to defy the U.S., after Cuba and Nicaragua, and strategically by far the most important because of the Panama Canal. But the bizarre feature of the Panama crisis was that there was no ideological problem with Panama's military ruler, General Noriega. Indeed, the U.S. had trained and even groomed him for high office.

A former military intelligence officer who had worked closely with the U.S. General Noriega became head of the armed forces in 1983, two years after the death of the charismatic General Omar Torrijos. This position made him the effective ruler, and the opposition press and politicians quickly began to accuse him of human rights abuses, and drugs and arms trafficking.

General Noriega really became a problem for Washington when the priorities of U.S. interests in Central and southern America began to change, as the domestic U.S. drug crisis became a greater political issue than the region's geopolitics.

The financial and political impact of drugs, through the vast amounts of money they could generate, was far greater in the southern American countries than their narcotic or social impact in the U.S. Although recent attention has been focused on the power of Colombia's cocaine cartel, Panama was the first country whose government was taken over by narco-politics.

But some kind of crisis in U.S.-Panama relations was probably inevitable. The Panama Canal, with its protective garrison of 10,000 U.S. troops, has throughout this century made the republic the most openly colonial U.S. presence in Central America.

The treaty negotiated by President Jimmy Carter, under which sovereignty of the Canal was to be transferred to Panama by the year 2000, changed the traditional nature of that relationship and held out to Panama the first prospect of a truly independent existence, without the hovering presence of U.S. troops.

But the overwhelming economic weight of the U.S. in Panama, and the country's continued dependence on U.S. foreign aid, always clouded the promise of that independence. The U.S. was so confident of its economic influence that its first move against General Noriega was to try sanctions, which served to devastate the local economy without bringing down the General.

General Noriega's Panama has now existed in a state of siege for two years, since demonstrations against his regime led to a declaration of a state of emergency in June of 1987. The demonstrations followed public accusations by retired Colonel Robert Hererra that Noriega was guilty of electoral fraud and politically motivated assassinations.

Although the formal charges of drug trafficking were not filed against Noriega by the U.S. courts until February of last year, the U.S. began to apply pressure against him soon after the declaration of emergency. The U.S. Senate first coupled its demand for a return to democracy with a threat to withhold its foreign aid, and in September 1987, bluntly said there would be no more until Panama re-established a civilian government.

There was a stalemate for five months, until the formal charges were filed against Noriega in the Florida courts. Attempting to reassert civilian authority, President Delvalle, who had been seen as a Noriega puppet, tried with U.S. support to dismiss the general from his post as head of the Panamanian Defence Force.

President Delvalle failed and was forced into hiding when Noriega won a vote of confidence from the National Assembly, but within a month, a mounting economic crisis had forced the closure of all Panama's banks. Amid rumours of U.S. support and massive anti-Noriega demonstrations, a police chief led an abortive coup against Noriega.

The Reagan government tried economic pressure, with an order for all U.S. citizens to withhold all payments to Panama, while Secretary of State George Shultz tried but failed to negotiate a deal that would have removed Noriega from office, without putting him into a U.S. jail. But the Reagan administration failed miserably to handle Noriega's defiance, and when Reagan left office, the general's supporters in Panama staged a triumphant "Reagan goes, Noriega stays" demonstration.

The Bush administration did not invite more humiliations. It was General Noriega himself who set the stage for the next crisis, authorising new elections in May. He either misjudged his popularity, assuming that his anti-U.S. stance would win him the votes of a people long resentful of the rich northern Gringos, or was convinced that he could rig the elections in his favour.

The ballot-rigging tried and failed, in part thanks to the vigilance and courage Jimmy Carter, who was able to publicise the blatant falsification of the vote. The government declared the elections void, blaming foreign interference. The widely-telvised brutality of Noriega's supporters, publicly beating opposition leaders including presidential candidate Guillermo Ford and murdering his bodyguard, served to finally discredit his regime.

But Noriega was able to hang on, vast amounts of drug money enabling him to buy the loyalty of senior army officers. The potent tradition of Latin American distrust for the U.S. meant that even after the suppression of the elections, the Organisation of American States was not ready to condemn him out of hand. The sacred OAS principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of a member state, along with distrust of the Yanquis, infuriated U.S. diplomats.

Washington held back from direct intervention, aware that an appearance of U.S. bullying might rally nationalist support for Noriega.

There was no doubt the U.S. was trying every possible avenue to topple Noriega, and if the CIA or USA Army Special Forces did not have a hand in the attempted coup, it was almost certainly not for want of trying. It took so long in part because of the network of support Noriega built and bought over the years, and in part because drug money meant that, in the words of a State Department wit, "Panamanian majors and colonels don't come so cheap these days."

But whatever the behind-the-scenes role of the U.S., there is no doubt that there was widespread popular loathing of Noriega and his corrupt regime among the Panamanian people. And — what will be crucial for the future — there was a powerful tradition of yearning for democracy which probably won last May's election, and which sustained October insurrection — The Guardian.



The youth echo the calls of the writers, vowing that Israel will "not defeat our yearning... We are a fate which cannot be escaped"

Just as Israeli attempts to suppress the Palestinian popular uprising have failed, so have attempts to suppress the wave of poetry and song that has accompanied it. **Ian Black**, in Jerusalem, hears a new note of hope from the West Bank and Gaza and records the uncertainty of Israel's response

This, our intifada, is a bride whose dowry is deportation and martyrs and the terrible prison and the wounds of thousands upon thousands and the demolition of homes and a river of tears or of sweat.

THIS SAD and defiant intifada wedding song is one of many written behind the barbed wire at Ansar III detention camp in the Negev desert.

The poem, by Al-Mutawakil Tah, chairman of the Palestinian Writers Association, is typical of the feverish outpouring that has accompanied the uprising in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Not all the literature of the intifada has been written by prisoners, but most has been produced in the front lines of the struggle. Its maxim might be that if the pen is less mighty than the stone, the writer can still play a supporting role. Hundreds of poems and short stories set out to reflect a hopeful and heroic chapter in the history of a people where hope and heroism are in short supply.

It is a literature that is far too immediate to be great, too involved to do more than stir emotions and summon up the blood. "We will have time to write everything later," says Ali al-Khalili, literary editor of the Al-Fajr newspaper. "Now we must write in a very careful way. We must show the bright face of the struggle."

The new poetry and prose reflects the way that the uprising is seen as a bold and innovative phase in Palestinian history. The human price — some 650 dead (including 120 children under 16 and at least 100 victims of inter-cine bloodletting), thousands wounded and imprisoned, and endless days of curfew and hardship — is secondary.

In some of the better works, the florid style of much popular Arabic verse has given way to a more cautious, economical use of language. Militancy and confidence, it seems, require fewer words. Several poets have experimented by writing in colloquial Palestinian Arabic, far from the formalised structures of the classical language. The effect of the improvising tradition of the zajal — a sort of troubadour or storyteller — is often felt.

"We define our literature in terms of historical periods and political events," argues Hanan Ashrawi, who teaches at Bir Zeit university near Ramallah when it is not closed by the Israeli army. "The literature of the intifada is the voice of the intifada, but the subject matter is very didactic. There is no literature beyond politics."

Poetry, has always been the most directly emotional mass art form of Arab culture, and in the harsh reality of Nabulus and Gaza today it has become as immediate as the graffiti that scar every wall or the clandestine leaflets that order strikes and issue instructions.

Khalil Tuma's poem, *Nida's (Appeal)*, displays a rare combination of the political and the intimate:

We rise from the barricade to see your eyes

For the sky is a crystal in which secrets are revealed.

Themes are repetitive. Maqali's (*Singshots*), an anthology published last year by the Writers' Association, has a picture of a masked youth on its back cover. The stone is the most frequently repeated image. Martyrs (shuhada) proliferate: children and women, not fedeyeen (fighters) are the heroes.

Fawzi al-Bakri's poem, *Man-shur (Leaflet)*, ends with the familiar slogan: "No voice shall rise above the voice of the intifada." Abdel Nasser Salah's *In the Beginning was the Stone* (also written in Ansar III) is a song of praise to the "stone that will lead a nation out of darkness into light."

Much of the literature is semi-clandestine: the "heavy hand" of the Israeli censor falls upon nearly every work submitted for publication: the East Jerusalem newspapers, which are under strict control and can face fines or closure for infringements of the regulations, suffer most.

Dog-eared books or photocopied pages torn from magazines pass from hand to hand, samizdat-style, or are sold under the counter from the half dozen Arabic bookshops in East Jerusalem, where conditions are marginally freer than in the West Bank and Gaza. Normal distribution is virtually impossible.

Writers live in fear of trouble with the authorities, of informers, of the knock on the door at night and of the hoods used by the Shin Bet secret police during interrogations. Like Al-Mutawakil Tah, most of the leading members of the writers association have been imprisoned during the uprising. "When I write," says Ali al-Khalili, "I move my papers from place to place like a cat moving its kittens away from danger."

These stirrings of creativity under the intifada are something



'Dead is the fear that lived in our hearts'

of a novelty. Palestinian literature after the great disaster of 1948 reflected the shock and humiliation of defeat and dispersion, and then the lack of support from the Arab countries that sheltered the refugees.

Alienation, loss of self-respect and a sense of being outcast went hand in hand with a comforting genre of nostalgia and "return" that blindly ignored the changes that had taken place in Al-Firdaus al-Mafqud — Paradise Lost. Like the exiled Jews before them, the Palestinians wept by the rivers of Babylon when they remembered Zion.

In the mid-sixties, when much of Arab Palestine had disappeared beneath the foundations of new Israeli towns and kibbutzim, one writer asked: "When shall we return and see our villages, our stones with the smoke rising from them; when shall we return and see our cities and the gardens of our homes?"

Themes of revenge and resistance took over after the second catastrophe of 1967, when what remained of Palestine came under Israeli rule. Literature became the maverick of the renewed struggle. What has grown up in the West Bank and Gaza since the Six-Day War might be called the literature of steadfastness. Now writing reflects a new hope.

Writers under occupation take pride in their work, and are highly sensitive to criticism that it is below the standard set by Palestinians working abroad, or by Samih al-Qasbi, the Druze poet working in the much freer atmosphere across the old "green line" border in Israel.

Al-Qasbi's recent poem, *Letter to the Invaders Who Do Not Read*, is written in a martial style that seems inappropriate to some West Bank writers. But it breathes defiance of Israel on a higher level, too:

You will not break our profundity
You will not defeat our yearning
We are a fate which you cannot escape.

The literature of the uprising is concrete and engaged. It has not produced anything like the subtle genius of the exiled Mahmoud Darwish ("Where should we go after the last frontiers? Where should the birds fly after the last sky?")

"Literature, ideology, history and politics are all connected for us," Ali al-Khalili once told the Israeli novelist, Amos Oz. "One cannot separate them. That is always the case for oppressed peoples. An oppressed people will not sing like a bird in a tree; he will sing like a bird in a cage."

Khalil believes that now that the bars have been prisoned apart, some of the grand old stock images — knights on horseback,

laurels of victory — need to be replaced: "There are no military heroes in the intifada," he says. "Our writers outside (the country) create these kind of people. We don't have them and we don't need them. There are no generals or epaulettes here."

The vision of Palestine is changing too. The concept of return in the conventional sense plays little role. Nabulus and Tulkarm have replaced Haifa and Lydda. Paradise lost and regained has been replaced by the nuts and bolts of localised struggle, pride, and achievement.

As the Palestinian uprising approaches its second birthday, only one Hebrew novel of note has so far taken up the theme of the longest, ugliest and most desperate war in the short history of the Jewish state. This is *Ta'am'on (Mirage)*, by the Israeli novelist, Yitzhak Ben-Ner.

The book, written in 1988, consists of four monologues: one is by Holi, a 19-year-old conscript serving with the army in Nabulus. When he and his unit face a crowd of masked, stone-throwing Arab youths in an alleyway in the

intifada," argues Nissim Calderon, a critic and teacher of Hebrew literature at Tel Aviv University. "The Palestinian uprising is a very difficult, very painful spiritual phenomenon for us. We are a people whose entire history is one of persecution and now it is we who are breaking bones."

The paralysis of Israel's literary class — dominated almost entirely by the liberal, dovish left — is a telling comment on the sheer novelty of the intifada, an ingenious weapon of the powerless that has done more for the Palestinian cause in 20 months than 20 years of armed struggle ever did. "Palestinian terrorism did not work," says Calderon, "not just because it is not a real military threat, and not only because of its basic immorality, but because it played on our deepest fear — of physical liquidation. But the intifada is about stones and children, and children don't threaten our existence."

The writers are defensive. Amos Oz, Israel's most famous novelist, insists that the question about silence is based on false assumptions. "The media is pre-

"The youth echo the calls of the writers, vowing that Israel will 'not defeat our yearning... we are a fate which cannot be escaped.'"

sent-minded, but literature needs greater perspective," he says. "Literature doesn't 'cover' reality, it discovers. Would you expect Graham Greene to produce a novel about Thatcher's Britain? If Herman Melville wrote *Moby Dick* in South Africa today, people would say it was about blacks and whites."

Israeli reportage, photography, cinema, and music have all dealt with the uprising more directly and more successfully than literature. Journalists — notably Ori Nir, the young West Bank correspondent for the Ha'aretz daily — have made tremendous efforts to convey the texture of life and literature on the other side of the Hebrew reader.

Israeli poetry has been more successful than any other literary form: Daliya Rabikovich, the country's finest living poet, writes with a quiet fury and shame that is retained even when her spare Hebrew verse is rendered treacherously into English. "Why, on that clear Sabbath, on that happy Sabbath, comes the memory of that man they beat to death?" she asked this summer.

Another poet, Aryeh Sivan, addressed the problematic of the



Young revolutionary poets and singers have become the heroes of intifada generation

subject, of expressing sympathy across the great divide between the two peoples, in a powerful and moving poem called "What will become of us in 1997." In "Death, Life, Language," Sivan asks desperately:

Is this attempt
To understand the view, or
position, of the other side
More serious than that of a
passenger

On a train hurtling towards
another train
To stop at the very last
moment by

Grabbing a branch from a
bush by the wayside?
I do not know.

Such impressive exceptions apart, the silence is profoundly deep because the conflict with the Arabs has always been an important theme in Hebrew literature. Today, it is also a difficult theme.

For 20 long years before the intifada began, Israelis chose to ignore what was happening in their own backyard. David Grossman's *The Yellow Wind*, which appeared in the summer of 1987, attracted more attention than any previous book that dealt directly with the question of occupation. It was no accident that it was essentially a work of reportage. Amos Oz x-rayed the subject at arm's length, in a manner perhaps too remote and allegorical for most readers, in *Black Box*.

"The real problem," argues Hanan Hever, a left-wing teacher of literature, "is that it is a priori difficult and complex to write in Hebrew about Palestinian suffering. This is a conflict between two entities and it's very hard today to formulate your literary position — at all levels? on which you have no perspective."

"There is political pressure on the text — just like there is on a placard that you take with you to a demonstration. If the message is unclear it simply won't be understood. There is very little room for nuance and ambivalence."

"War is an event, but the intifada is a situation which has a history, a present, and a future. There is no absolute right — although there are elements of absolute evil. I'm not prepared to hear any explanations about killing children."

On both sides of the wire popular songs have proved far more capable than most Hebrew or Arabic literature of conveying the powerful and conflicting emotions released by the Palestinian intifada.

Hava Albarstein, one of Israel's finest singers, caused a furore earlier this year when she released a stunning version of

Had Gadya (Only One Kid), the ancient Aramaic ballad sung around the Passover 'seder' table — on the night that is "different from all other nights" — by Jews celebrating the Exodus from Egypt.

Albarstein was following an old tradition of adapting the ceremony to give it contemporary relevance, adding to the festival's famous "four questions" about the meaning of Passover a new and troubling one of her own:

On all other nights I ask only
four questions
But tonight I have another one
How long will this circle of
terror continue?

Hunter and hunted, beater
and beaten
When will this madness end?
What has changed?

I have changed this year
Once I was a lamb and a quiet kid
Today I'm a tiger and a
hungry wolf
I've been a dove and I've been
a deer

Today I don't know who I am.
The force of the song was in its sheer familiarity. Even the most unobservant secular Jew knows the words and tune of Had Gadya, and the sharp rhetoric of Albarstein's unanswered and unanswerable question, on the Jewish festival of freedom, was particularly poignant.

Si Hi-Man, a younger Israeli rock singer with distinctly punkish tendencies, sparked off a similar row when she sang *Yorim veBochim* (Shooting and Crying), a harsh contemporary allusion to the soul-searching of Israeli soldiers troubled by the need to fight and kill in the 1967 war:

The street cleaner told me
That in his village everything
had changed

Life looks different in the
shadow of the filth
Little boys play with lead and
girls with dolls of steel
Life looks different

In the shadow of the filth.
During the first year of the intifada it looked for a while as if Israeli artists were about to sign up for a massive anti-war protest. But it never happened. Si Hi-Man's song was banned by Army Radio and one of Hava Albarstein's fans stopped her in the street and told her he had burned all her records.

Most Israeli singers live in Tel Aviv, far from the front lines in Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza, and the widespread disapproval that met some of the songs dampened enthusiasm for further protest.

Nurit Galron's song, *Après Nous le Déluge*, explored the themes of guilt and responsibility for the uprising while Tel Aviv ate and drank and made merry.

"Don't tell me about the girl who lost her eye," she sang. "Don't tell me about the girl who lost her childhood."

Dan Almagor, a popular playwright and humourist, was dismissed from the Army Education Corps after suggesting that many ordinary Israelis were behaving like Germans who "didn't know" what was going on under Hitler.

Palestinian music is the most popular art form of the intifada. Songs have become an integral part of the struggle, with stones and children, as in literature, the most common images.

It can be heard blaring out from cassette machines in the alleys, or on the Al-Quds radio station broadcasting from Syria, interspersed with a heavy diet of news flashes about the latest violence. The DJs of Radio Monte Carlo and the PLO's Voice of the Revolution from Baghdad also play intifada songs.

Most are shallow and unsubtle appeals to the emotions, exhortations to continue the struggle whatever the price, a muzak of slogans to fight by. Few of them rise above the level of heroism and sacrifice. All are intensely political, a far cry from the cloying love ballads that are the staple of so many Arab crooners.

The most popular singer in the West Bank is Riyad Awad, from Tulkarm, who has added an electric guitar and a synthesizer to the more traditional sounds of the oudh, the tambour and the wooden flute to produce works like *The Revolution Lives*. I am a child of the Revolution, I am from Jerusalem, and the earth of my country. Awad's most famous song, *Intifada*, goes like this:

With petrol bomb and stone
I will build my state
I will bear my revolution
My strength increase
My land, my people
Strike with the stone
Burn, burn the fire
Put up barriers
Revolution, revolution,
do not fade.

It loses something in translation from the Arabic, but, to be honest, not much more than the rhyme.

The latest hit in the Gaza Strip is guaranteed to send a chill down the spine of anyone who hopes that there can be a happy end to this conflict. Entitled *The Bus Song* and set to a popular wedding melody, it praises the man from the Nuseirat refugee camp who seized the steering wheel of an Israeli bus in July and sent it plunging into a ravine near Jerusalem, killing 16 passengers.

Perhaps the finest of all the songs of the uprising is *Stone and Onion*, one of the tracks on *Children of Palestine*, the understated and widely-acclaimed album by the East Jerusalem singer, Mustafa al-Kurd. Sung in a haunting traditional style but to an original tune, *Stone and Onion* evokes the mass demonstrations that caught the imagination of the world when the intifada was at its peak last year: yet the onion carried to counter the effects of teargas and the bucket of water used to douse the Israeli grenades are simply reminders of familiar external reality. The real theme is the conquest of fear:

Dead is the fear that lived in
our hearts
That killed the hopes and
blocked the paths
That put out the lights
Fear is dead and I buried it
with my own hands

Fear was a monster that
oppressed us, was cruel
to us, that smashed the
jar and spilled the oil.
Fear is dead and I buried it
with my own hands.

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JORDAN MARKET PLACE

Japan pledges to improve quality of foreign assistance

TOKYO (AP) — Responding to criticism that Japanese foreign aid is ineffective, Tokyo will improve the quality of its assistance to developing countries, a foreign ministry official said Friday.

Japan became the world's largest donor of foreign aid in 1988, surpassing the United States, with its actual disbursement reaching \$9.13 billion in that year, according to the foreign ministry.

However, critics say billions of dollars are being wasted because of a lack of coordination and expertise. Criticism also comes from groups who say Japanese Overseas Development Assistance, or ODA, has contributed to environmental destruction.

"We need to improve the efficiency of ODA," said Takanori Kitamura, director of the foreign ministry's Economic Cooperation Bureau. "We like to see we can assist more aid, but there are also three or four areas which need improvement."

The government's ODA report, released by the ministry Friday, spells out the country's foreign aid policy in coming years

and calls for improving the quality of Japan's development assistance.

It urged that Japan improve the terms offered to aid recipients, pointing out that it ranks 18th among industrialized countries in the proportion of aid given as grants. In 1987, 75.4 per cent of Japan's aid was in grant form, compared to 97.2 per cent for the United States and 98.9 per cent for Britain, according to the report.

"With regard to improving the terms of assistance, Japan's grant element is the lowest among countries of the development assistance committee," a sub-organization of the Paris-based Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development, it said.

The paper also said Tokyo's ODA programmes are not well-planned and lack analysis and information about the recipients' needs.

"A flexible and adaptable aid

programme must be implemented in order to meet the diverse needs of developing countries," it said. "In order to promote a well-planned aid programme, assistance-related information should be collected and analysed, policy discussions should be held with recipient countries and a country-by-country aid policy should be set up," the paper noted.

The report also urged Japan to increase the number of development specialists it employs; to coordinate its foreign aid.

Only 1,500 personnel run Japan's ODA programmes, substantially fewer than in the United States and European donor countries.

The United States, for decades the largest donor, has cut its aid budget while Japan's official development assistance, helped by the doubling of the yen's value against the dollar, has risen dramatically.

At the summit meeting in Toronto in 1988, then-prime minister Noboru Takeshita pledged over \$50 million of aid in the five-year period ending in 1992 as part of Japan's international cooperation initiative.

Jordan, S. Arabia open talks today

AMMAN (Petra) — The Joint Jordanian-Saudi Economic Committee holds a three-day meeting here beginning Sunday to discuss scopes of cooperation in the commercial field, developing Arab certificates of origin, exchanging information on specifications and metrology and other exchange of commodities.

The committee, which will be co-chaired by Ministry of Industry and Trade Secretary-General Mohammad Al Saqqaf and the Saudi Finance and National Economy Under Secretary Usamah Ja'afar Faqih, is expected to discuss agricultural cooperation and the possibility of holding a Jordanian industrial exhibition in Riyadh and Jeddah.

Also to be discussed will be land, sea and air transport and communications, and scopes of cooperation in the scientific research field between the Royal Scientific Society and King Abdul Aziz Centre for Science and Technology.

CAEU official outlines Arab economic woes

AMMAN (Petra) — Director of the Council of Arab Economic Unity's (CAEU's) Department for Coordination and Planning, Adnan Al Sayyed, Saturday said that world economic changes and crises have left their great impact on Arab economies.

Addressing the opening session of the CAEU's economic committee, Al Sayyed stressed the

need for embarking on precautionary measures to accelerate the growth rates in various economic sectors.

Such a growth, Sayyed noted, should exceed the population growth rates and should be sufficient to meet the living requirements.

He added that the economic and development problems encountered by Arab countries are caused by internal imbalances, including budget deficits, increased borrowing, fluctuation of local currency exchange rates, and the increasing inflation rates.

These imbalances have been further aggravated by the negative reflections of international crises which hit our economies because of their exposure to external factors and their increased involvement in international markets.

The situation has further deteriorated by the limited flow of external resources and the increasing counter flow of currency, including the capital flight which was estimated at \$40 billion during the last ten years.

The foreign debt constituted a big burden on Arab economies, which have suffered a lot as a result of the increasing debt.

GCC sees EC merger boosting oil demand

LONDON (R) — A Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) official was quoted Saturday as saying a single European Community (EC) market in 1992 should increase demand for Gulf Arab oil and petrochemicals.

GCC Assistant Secretary-General Abdullah Quwaisz told the Saudi-owned newspaper Asharq Al Awsat that officials from both sides would meet in Spain in February to discuss the impact of the merger on future relations.

"The European market merger in 1992 will... increase economic growth rates, which will in turn boost its demand for oil and petroleum products, including GCC exports," the paper quoted Quwaisz as saying.

The official warned that limiting access to GCC exports might make of the market an "impenetrable fortress against others."

The GCC, a political and economic alliance comprising Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, wants to narrow a trade deficit that last year reached \$4.4 billion in favour of the EC.

Dow Jones nears 2,800 mark

NEW YORK (R) — Wall Street rallied to a fourth consecutive record close Friday, supported by a strong bond market and speculation that the Federal Reserve may ease credit after the government reported surprisingly weak September employment.

The Dow Jones rose 11.96 points to close at 2,785.52, a new closing high that put the Dow within striking distance of 2,800.

For the week, the 30-share Dow gained 92.70 points, the largest weekly gain since June 3, 1988.

Many broader market indexes

jumped to new highs Friday, including the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) composite index of all listed stocks, which rose

0.89 to 198.94 and Standard and Poor's composite index of 500 stocks, up 1.81 to 358.78.

The over-the-counter NASDAQ index, rose 2.98 to 483.64, its sixth straight closing high.

Market analysts said the week's big gains signified the return of institutional investors to the market.

Oil, consumer products, airline and technology stocks attracted special interest Friday.

But the rally was once again focused on blue chips. Advancing issues only narrowly outpaced losers 767 to 657 on the NYSE.

Volume was moderate with

172.5 million shares trading hands, down from 177.9 million shares Thursday.

Blue chips rallied on a Labour Department report on September employment showing the economy slowed last month from its fast pace during the summer, leading to speculation the Fed could lower interest rates.

The government said the nation's civilian unemployment rate rose to 5.3 per cent in September from 5.2 per cent in August, but the gain was masked by underlying weakness.

Payrolls were bloated by the return of 75,000 striking telephone workers and 95,000 local government employees, most of whom were school teachers returning from the summer recess. "Most of the action at the

opening was a response to the employment, which was favourable for the bond market and to interest rates in general. Stocks firmed on that," said Lewis Smith, a technical analyst at Bear Stearns.

The prospect of lower interest rates sparked a rally in the bond market, which helped support stocks. The treasury's benchmark 30-year bond rose 23/32 to 101-7/32, lowering its yield to a 8.02 per cent from 8.07 per cent Thursday.

Analysts also said stocks drew support from the dollar's strength in the face of Western central bank intervention since a strong dollar encourages foreign investment.

Romanian leader finds poverty, capitalism in market economy

VIENNA (AP) — Romanian communist leader Nicolae Ceausescu told economic experts in Bucharest that promoting a market economy is a step back to poverty and capitalism, Romania's state news agency reported Friday.

It quoted Ceausescu, a stringent critic of reforms in the communist bloc, as making clear to a party meeting of economic experts Thursday that under his hardline policies Romania never would adopt far-reaching reforms of the Stalinist system underway in the Soviet Union, Hungary and Poland.

"Let's consider some socialist countries which have started along this way and extolled the 'market economy' stating it will help them solve their economic problems," Agerepress agency quoted Ceausescu as saying. "Our press often published

stories from some socialist (communist) countries on price rises and soaring inflation. The result of all this is an increasing number of people who can hardly make a living on their incomes," he reportedly said.

"There is no room for the so-called free market since this does not mean to go ahead but to go back to capitalism, and we must in no way allow such a thing to happen," he stressed.

The report indicated Ceausescu did not name the Soviet Union, Hungary and Poland as countries where the ruling communist parties have given the private sector a limited role.

In Romania, East Germany and Czechoslovakia, by contrast, the leaderships either have completely rejected the need for change or adopted only cautious economic reforms.

"We must obviously preserve socialist trade, price control and ensure a good supply of the population," Ceausescu said.

Under his Socialist-styled centralised economy, Romania has faced widespread shortages, including rationing of basic foods and a ban on driving private cars in winter to save gasoline.

Delegates to a Romanian Communist Party congress scheduled next month have been urged in an unsigned appeal to denounce Ceausescu publicly for incompetence and oust him as party leader.

The party's policy-setting central committee in summer unanimously proposed the 71-year-old



Nicolae Ceausescu
Ceausescu is reelected at the congress to be held in Bucharest Nov. 20-25.

Warsaw offers Poles unrelieved austerity

WARSAW (R) — Finance Minister Leszek Balcerowicz offered Poles a harsh dose of economic austerity Friday but said no relief from sky-rocketing prices and grim food queues could be expected for at least a year.

Balcerowicz, deputy prime minister responsible for the economy, said the new Solidarity-led government had been given a last chance to implement a "total change" from Poland's communist system to a free market economy.

"But this chance was given to us in extremely bad conditions," he told his first news conference.

The new government is the first in Eastern Europe not dominated by communists since the 1940s. It took office Sept. 12, committed to transforming Poland into a free market economy amid signs of economic collapse.

Officials say inflation could reach 900-1,000 per cent by December. Industrial production is falling, import funds are short,

food shortages are chronic and queues are lengthening despite emergency aid shipments from the West.

Balcerowicz said Poland had to start putting its economic house in order by cutting spending, freeing prices, tightening tax discipline, reducing state subsidies and wage indexation and limiting pay increases.

He said his policies would cause bankruptcies and industrial shutdowns and bring unemployment to 10-20 per cent of the 17 million-strong work force.

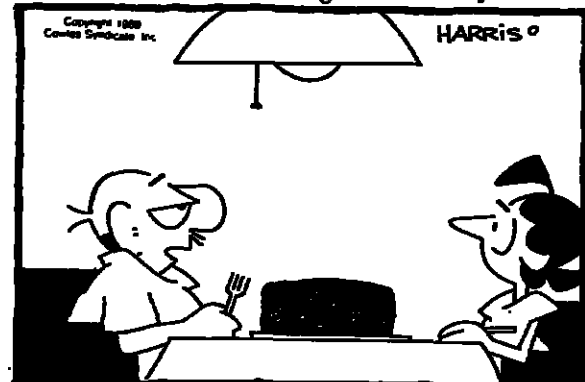
Balcerowicz fended off repeated questions about the possibility of social unrest by saying the expected public support for his policies.

But he warned Poles not to expect visible improvement in the short term.

"I have here to state that despite our will and our programme it will not be possible for us to liquidate or stop certain negative tendencies," Balcerowicz said.

THE BETTER HALF.

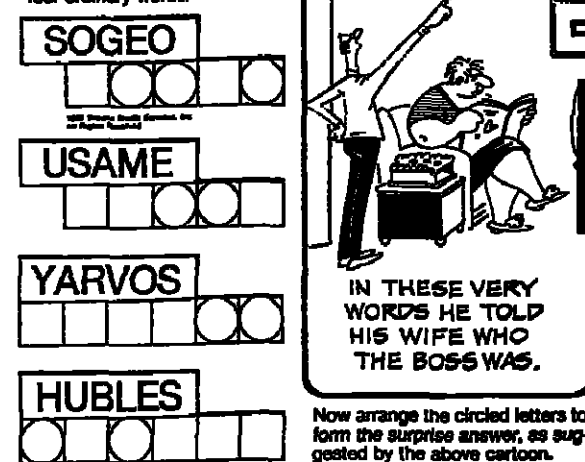
By Harris



"You add stuff to meat loaf to make a little bit of meat look like a lot. I added a toaster."

JUMBLE.

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Answer: "S O G E O" THE "U S A M E" (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: TEMPO ABATE GUITAR SPLEEN
Answer: A bikini never attracts attention until someone does this—PUTS IT ON

Weekly Amman Financial Market trading

AMMAN (J.T.) — The following table summarises trading activities at the Amman Financial Market starting Saturday Sept. 30, '89 and ending Wednesday Oct. 4, '89. (Figures in Jordanian dinars)

Name of company Number of shares Volume of trade Opening price Closing price Per value

Banking and financial institutions

Industrial Development Bank	400	636	1.600	1.640	1.000
Jordan Islamic Bank	1849	4340	2.350	2.340	1.000
Jordan Kuwait Bank	17000	23800	1.420	1.400	1.000
Flousing Bank	11114	20672	1.860	1.860	1.000
Arab Jordan Investment Bank	51527	1391229	27.550	27.000	5.000
Qairo Amman Bank	748	10472	14.100	14.000	5.000
Bank of Jordan	4800	950838	190.000	194.000	10.000
Arab Bank	21065	52464	2.500	2.500	1.000
Jordan National Bank	13326	43863	3.170	3.270	1.000
Jordan Finance House for Development	197676	336754	1.570	1.650	1.000
National Financial Investments	21783	58314	2.850	2.630	1.000
National Portfolio Securities	—	—	—	—	—
Arab Finance Corporation (Jordan)	—	—	—	—	—
Jordan Securities Corporation	—	—	—	—	—
Real Estate Financing Corporation	—	—	—	—	—
Beit Al Mal Saving & Investment for Housing	—	—	—	—	—

Insurance and reinsurance

Middle East Insurance	21386	38134	1.850	1.800	1.000
Jordan French Insurance	5187	14381	2.750	2.750	1.000
Jordan Insurance	9250	11310	1.190	1.240	1.000
Arab Life and Accident Insurance	100	151	1.540	1.540	1.000
Yarmouk Insurance and Reinsurance	1400	1992	1.370	1.440	1.000
Holy Land Insurance	250	413	1.600	1.650	1.000
Philadelphia Insurance	4691	7599	1.620	1.620	1.000
Arab Union International Insurance	—	—	—	—	—
Jordan Gulf Insurance	—	—	—	—	—
General Arabia Insurance	—	—	—	—	—
National Abhiya Insurance	—	—	—	—	—
Arab Belgian Insurance and Reinsurance	—	—	—	—	—
United Insurance	—	—	—	—	—

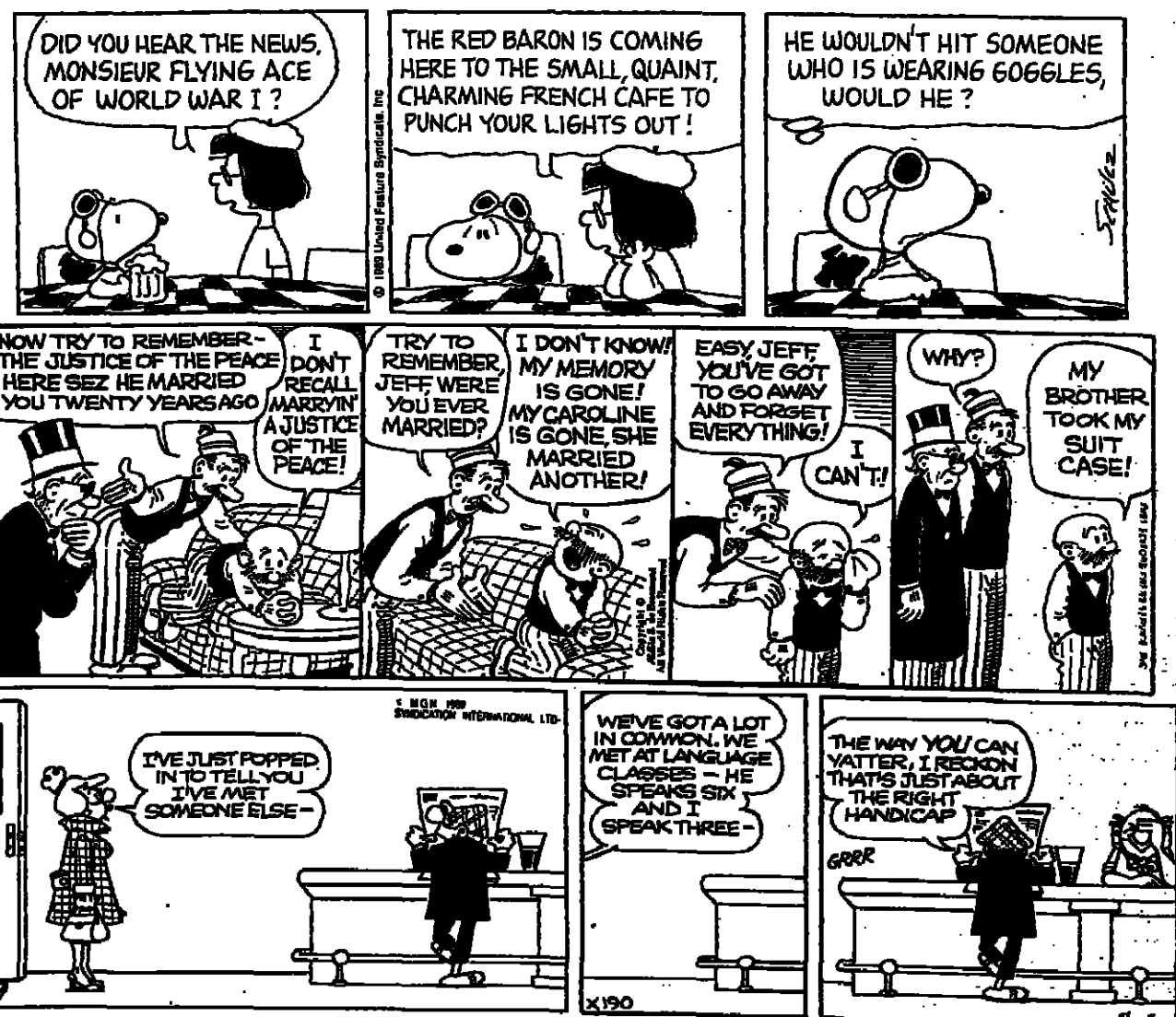
Services and industries

General Investments	—	—	—	—	—
Imna for Investment and Financial Facilities	—	—	—	—	—
Duro for Housing and Investment	17000	17273	1.020	1.000	1.000
Real Estate Investment (Agarco)	363600	228085	0.630	0.640	1.000
Jordan Gulf Real Estate Investment	72360	27158	0.360	0.380	1.000
Petra Enterprises and Leasing Equipments	10760	1829	0.670	0.670	1.000
Equipment Leasing & Maintenance/Ta'jeero	15550	5278	0.840	0.850	1.000
International Contracting & Investment	—	—	—	—	—
Jordanian Electric Power	5679	8126	1.440	1.430	1.000
Irbid District Electricity	249129	418530	1.660	1.670	1.000
Hotels and Tourism	—	—	—	—	—
United Middle East and Commodore Hotels	250	115	0.480	0.460	1.000
Garage Owners Federation Office	—	—	—	—	—
Jordan National Shipping Lines	288800	561385	1.840	2.030	1.000
Jordan Press Foundation	—	—	—	—	—
Jordan Press and Publishing	—	—	—	—	—
Dar Al Shaab Press, Printing and Publishing	—	—	—	—	—
Jordan Dairy	22134	24850	1.100	1.120	1.000
Arab Pharmaceutical Manufacturing	50411	233480	4.450	4.660	1.000
Intermediate Petrochemical Industries	326145	832295	2.610	2.570	1.000
Jordan Phosphate Mines	5807	24634	4.210	4.250	1.000
Industrial, Commercial and Agricultural (Itaja)	28362	50015	1.740	1.770	1.000
Arab Chemical Detergent Industries	15050	80008	5.150	5.420	1.000
Jordan Kuwait for Agricultural Products	—	—	—	—	—
Jordan Sweets and Chocolate Manufacturing	—	—	—	—	—
Aladdin Industries	230283	698568	2.760	3.070	1.000
Arab Aluminium Manufacturing	118100	259710	2.080	2.170	1.000
Jordan Worsteds Mills	32605	83196	2.500	2.600	1.000
Jordan Ceramics	405	919	2.390	2.270	1.000
Chemical Industries	686500	1081551	1.480	1.530	1.000
Jordan Industries and Match (JIMCO)	11360	41005	3.420	3.600	1.000
Dar Al Dawa' for Development and Investment	33951	78861	2.280	2.350	1.000
National Steel Industries	63650	242913	3.680	3.800	5.000
Universal Chemical Industries	—	—	—	—	—
General Mining	—	—	—	—	—
Jordan Petroleum Refinery	2507	19876	7.930	7.890	1.000
Jordan Lime & Brick	24730	2840	0.120	0.120	1.000
National Industries	—	—	—	—	—
Arab Paper Converting and Trading	—	—	—	—	—
Arab Investment and International Trade	147073	78530	0.480	0.560	1.000
Jordan Wooden Industries (JWICO)	17650	51601	2.900	2.910	1.000
Livestock and Poultry	420	302	0.720	0.720	1.000
Jordan Pipes Manufacturing	39620	102602	2.550	2.600	1.000
Raffa Industrial for Plastic Bags	—	—	—	—	—
Jordan Paper and Cardboard	6863	41698	5.800	6.500	1.000
Jordan Rockwool Industries	572465	1150032	1.850	2.100	1.000
Trans-Jordan Minerals Research	15780	10888	0.730	0.690	1.000
Jordan Glass Industries	—	—	—	—	—
Orient Dry Batteries Factory	—	—	—	—	—
Woolen Industries	—	—	—	—	—
Jordan Tanning	—	—	—	—	—
Jordan Printing and Packaging	—	—	—	—	—
Jordan Tobacco and Cigarette	—	—	—	—	—
Mas Industries	—	—	—	—	—
Arab Center for Pharmaceuticals & Chemicals	276075	619587	2.200	2.250	1.000
National Cable & Wire Manufacturing	45520	158392	3.430	3.550	1.000
Jordan Spinning & Weaving	229530	540363	2.410	2.300	1.000
Jordan Sulpho Chemicals	181010	377987	1.960	2.080	1.000
Jordan Cement Factories	63060	63499	1.040	0.990	1.000
Jordan Glass Industries	9750	10230	1.020	1.070	1.000
Jordan Precast Concrete Industry	34624	20579	0.590	0.580	1.000
Grand total	4,698,140	11,244,172	—	—	—

Peanuts

Mutt'n' Jeff

Andy Capp



AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Saturday, October 7, 1989
Central Bank official rates

	Buy	Sell	French franc	97.1	98.1
U.S. dollar	622.0	628.0	Japanese yen (for 100)	437.0	441.4
Pound Sterling	990.7	1009.7	Dutch guilder	291.6	294.5
Deutschmark	329.4	332.7	Swedish crown	96.1	97.1
			Italian lira (for 100)	45.0	45.5

